

'Y' Interchange Called Key To Downtown Progress

Community Affairs File

6 MAR 9 1972

Community Affairs File

By RICHARD EVANS
Star Staff Writer

Completion of a long-standing urban renewal redevelopment project to take through city traffic off Wabash Avenue in the downtown area is the key to improving the downtown business district, according to Mayor William Brighton.

Brighton made the comment during an interview at City Hall Wednesday evening, following the first meeting of the 18-member Mayor's Committee for Preservation of Downtown Terre Haute.

During the meeting of the special committee, drawn from a wide range of community interests, the group elected as its

chairman Lucien H. Meis Jr., who is vice president of Meis Department Store, one of the largest businesses in the downtown area. Arch R. Dunbar, president of Wabash Federal Savings and Loan Association, was named vice-chairman.

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The consensus of the group following the two-hour session was that no concrete plans to promote the downtown area can be laid until the "Y" interchange at the city's west edge is completed, according to Brighton, who acted as spokesman for the group.

Brighton said progress on the construction project will remain at a standstill until the plans are approved by the Indi-

ana State Highway Commission, and a number of the group will travel to Indianapolis next week to seek approval of the project.

The interchange at the Wa-

See DOWNTOWN

On Page 25, Column 3

Downtown

Continued From Page 1

bash River bridge would route eastbound traffic on U.S. 40 to Ohio Street, and westbound traffic would be routed along Cherry Street, rejoining Wabash at the bridge.

According to Brighton, most of the money needed to construct the traffic project is already committed from the federal government as a part of the Community Center Urban Renewal Project, but the state highway commission will not approve the plan until city officials come up with an acceptable proposal to route traffic back to U.S. 40 on the east side of the downtown district.

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Brighton said several alternatives are being studied. One would route traffic back to Wabash Avenue at Ninth Street with an interchange similar to the one on the west end of the thoroughfare.

The mayor said the city engineer and the Area Planning Department are working on plans for such a project for consideration by the highway commission.

Another alternative would involve the state highway commission's relinquishing control of U.S. 40 from the eastern city limit to the western limit, giving the city responsibility for maintaining the thoroughfare.

A third possibility, according to Brighton would involve transferring the state right-of-way for U.S. 40 to other city streets, as has been done in some cities.

The possibilities will be studied by the committee members at the Indianapolis meeting, with efforts aimed at finding a way to let bids on the westside construction project before June 30, according to Brighton.

Both Brighton and Golby Uhler, executive director of the Department of Redevelopment have indicated that the commitment by the federal government to bear most of the construction cost of such a project may be withdrawn if bids are not let before the June 30 date.

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Uhler said his department is still hoping that bids can be let by April and that the project can be completed before the end of 1972.

Plans for the eventual construction of a downtown shopping mall along Wabash Avenue have also been discussed by downtown businessmen and city planners for some time, and the "Y" interchange would make way for such a project if it becomes feasible, Brighton said.

The effort to aid the downtown Terre Haute business district was prompted in late February after the Root Store, one of the largest downtown businesses, indicated that it might close its downtown operation in favor of its shopping center location.

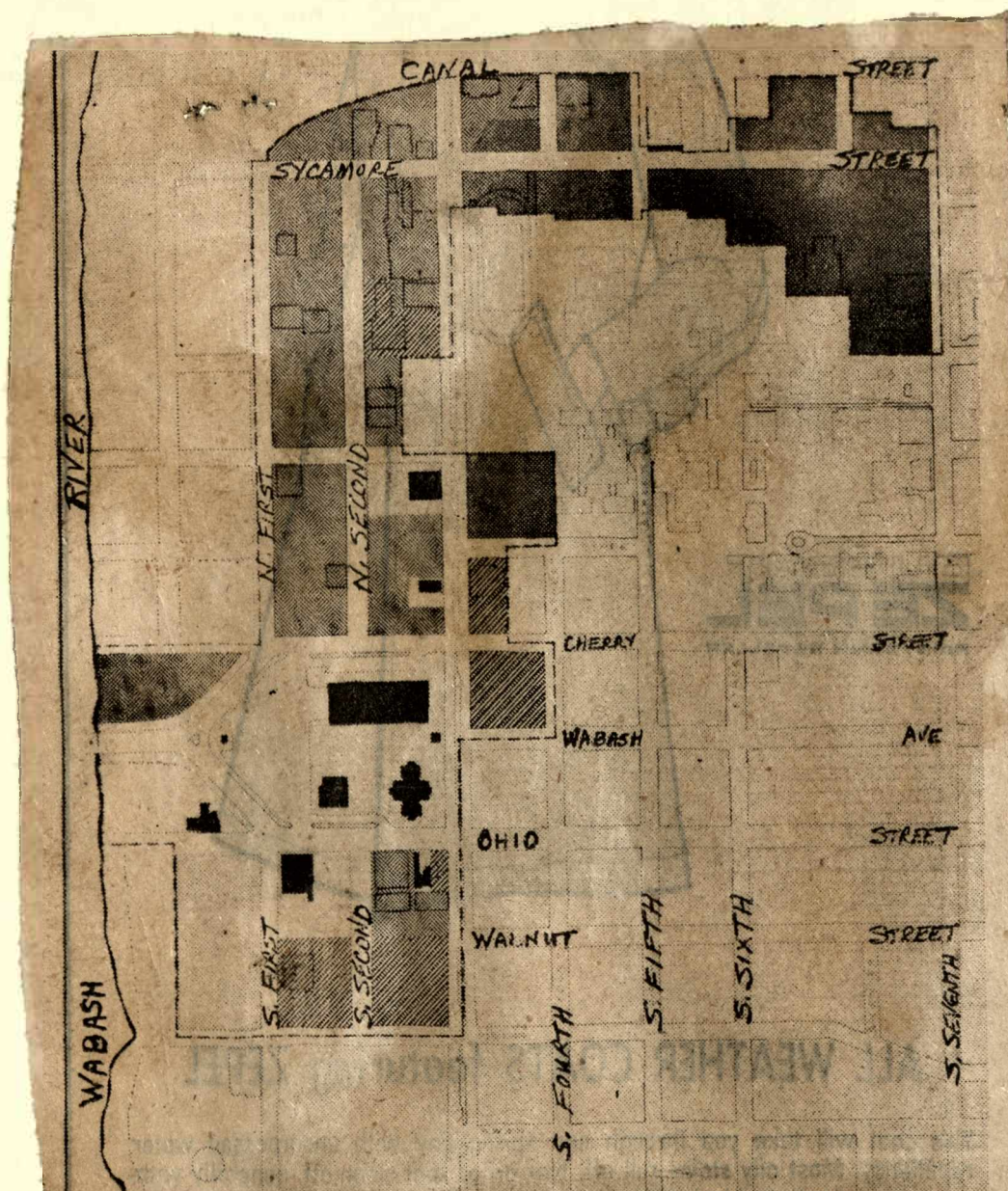
According to Brighton the store has a rapidly approaching deadline for deciding whether to pour a substantial amount of money into the aging store or close the operation.

The mayor's blue ribbon committee will meet regularly on the second and fourth Wednesday's of each month in a continuing effort to discover and tackle the problems which have contributed to a gradual decline in the downtown area, Brighton said.

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"KEY" TO DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT—Completion of an urban renewal project to take through city traffic off Wabash Avenue in the downtown area is the key to rejuvenating the ailing downtown business area, according to Mayor William J. Brighton, who commented following the first meeting Wednesday afternoon of a blue ribbon mayor's committee formed about two weeks ago to study the problems of the downtown district. Shown in the diagram above is the original redevelopment plan including the "Y" interchange at the Wabash River bridge on U.S. 40. The original plan, dating from 1965 has been somewhat modified to form an ellipse instead of a definite "Y" at the city's west edge, according to Golby Uhler, executive director of the Department of Redevelopment. Brighton says the traffic change cannot be completed until the state highway commission has approved it.

Community Affairs File

Downtown "Y" Work Set To Begin Wednesday, July 5

By JAMES DRESSLER
Tribune Staff Writer

Work will begin July 5 on the "Y" interchange on U.S. 40 at the Wabash River bridge, Golby C. Uhler, executive director of the Terre Haute Department of Redevelopment, told THE TRIBUNE Wednesday.

Noting that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Tuesday gave the contractor the go ahead to start work, Uhler said:

"The contractor is starting to order supplies now and will be getting his business office in place to start work July 5, the day after the Fourth of July."

Uhler said the prime contractor, Gordon Johnson Inc., and White Excavating, a major subcontractor, must complete the job in 240 days, which means the "Y" will be completed in March of 1973.

The \$590,000 project has been on the drawing board since 1965.

Mayor William J. Brighton, in his first year as chief executive of the city, considers construction of the "Y" on U.S. 40 at the Wabash River bridge a key to future rejuvenation of downtown Terre Haute.

A mall, which is a future possibility for the heart of the city, could come following construction

of the "Y," with cooperation among the downtown business interests, city and federal governments. The "Y," of course, will permit U.S. 40 to bypass Wabash Avenue from the Wabash River to a point on the west from 9th to 11th Sts. The "Y" will permit east bound traffic to be diverted onto Ohio St. after coming off the river bridge while westbound traffic will use Cherry St. and rejoin U.S. 40 at the bridge.

Another "Y" interchange eventually will be located near 9th St. to divert traffic at the east end of the downtown area,

although no specific site for that "Y" has been determined yet.

The city hopes to get TOPICS funds to assist in construction of the second "Y," Uhler said.

Although the city has received approval from the Indiana State Highway Commission to close U.S. 40 through the downtown area, Uhler said the highway will not be closed to traffic until the new facility is completed.

Since Interstate 70 was opened in Terre Haute, Uhler noted that thru traffic has dropped

Continued On Page 5, Col. 3.

Downtown

Continued From Page One.

sharply on U.S. 40 in the city.

He said:

"A recent survey showed that only 8 per cent of the traffic on U.S. 40 is thru traffic now."

Commenting on the coming start of construction on the "Y," Uhler said:

"I feel real pleased about it. It's just a matter of putting everything in place now. We've completed all of the intricate work from our end, but we'll be watching the contractors fulfill their responsibilities."

Gordon Johnson Inc., the general contractor, was low bidder for the "Y" at the river bridge with a bid of \$632,923.35, which was in excess of the \$690,000 allocated from federal funds to finance the project. The contractor and the Department of Redevelopment reduced some items to bring the bid into line with the grant.

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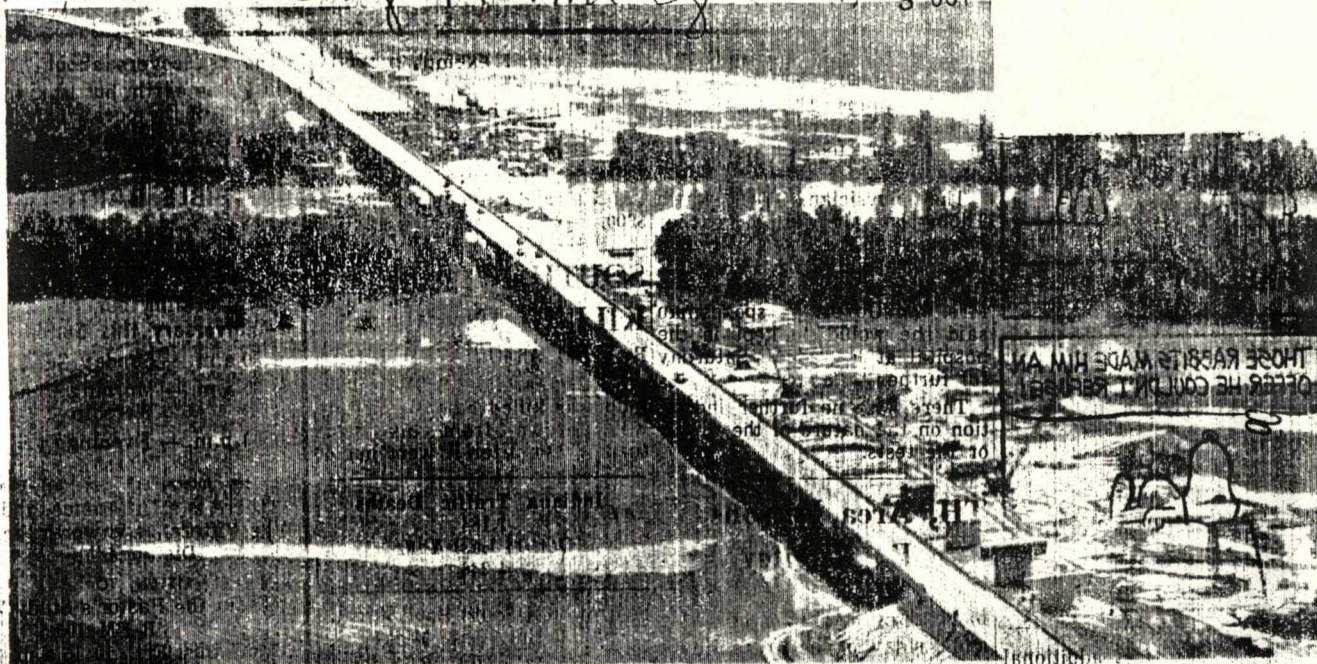
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City Planning Unit

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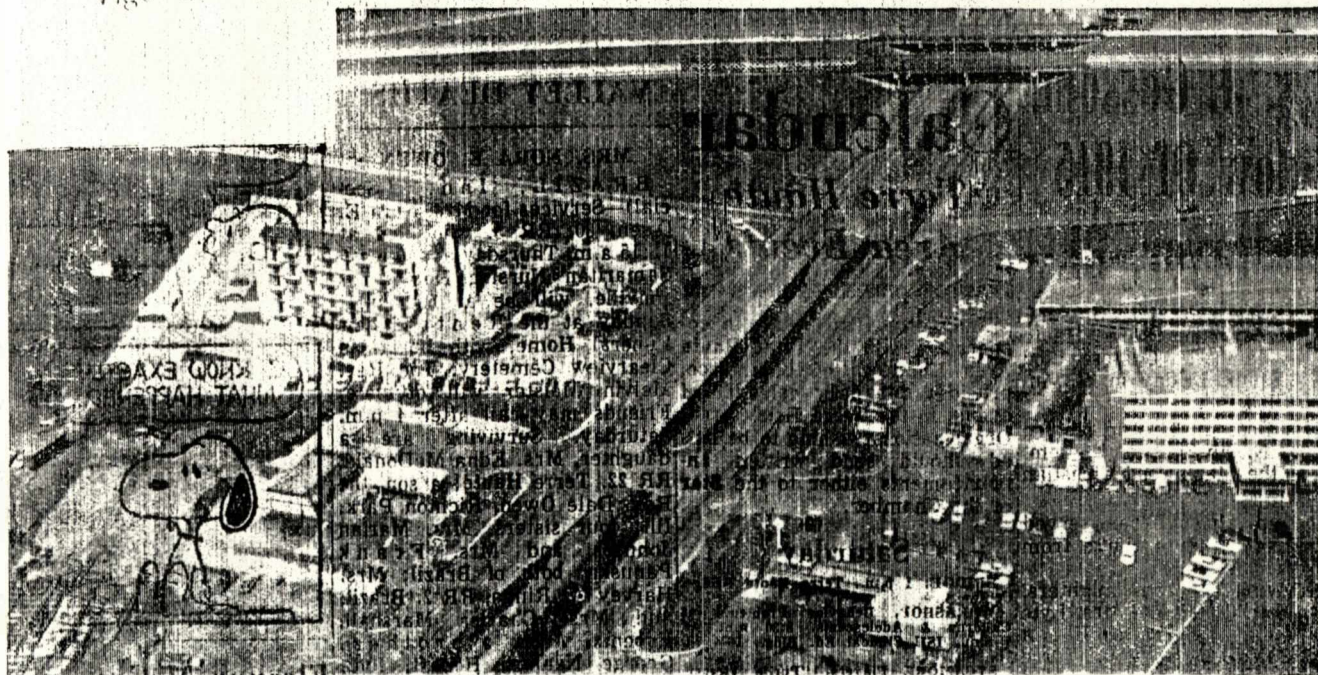


DEVELOPMENTS IN LOCAL TRAVEL FACILITIES—Work is progressing rapidly on the million-dollar Abrell Memorial Bridge over the Wabash River just north of the city — part of a \$15-million

project to develop four-lane travel from Terre Haute north to Clinton on Ind. 63. To the south on U.S. 41, which joins the state highway, new facilities for lodging travelers have also sprung

Community Affairs File

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up. On the left of the right-hand photo is the new Royal Inn, and on the right is the Holiday Inn which has also expanded its facilities. The U.S. 41 and Ind. 63 combination will eventually

create a four-lane north-south thoroughfare the length of the state, according to state highway planners.

(Aerial photo by Kadel)

R-H Students Probe Mall For Downtown Terre Haute

Community Affairs File *City Planning (T.H.)*

By WAYNE PERRY
Tribune Staff Writer

Ts DEC 21 1975

Conversion of the downtown Terre Haute business area into an eight-block open air shopping mall, complete with mini-parks, an enclosed sidewalk system, and two multi-level parking garages, is the subject of an extensive engineering systems design prepared by five senior mechanical engineering students at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology.

The proposed center, which might be named the Old National Shopping Mall, would cost \$2.3 million.

The design plan, which Sid Levin of the Downtown Business Association terms as a "beautiful portrayal that makes good sense on paper," is unfortunately much more expensive than other proposals for the revitalization of the downtown have been.

However, Levin says that some ideas in the plan, which are too costly now, may be things to become reality in the future.

Bruce Meek, group leader of the students who prepared the report, notes, "We agreed to do something to improve the downtown area. Some of us were interested in transportation, others were interested in the mall idea, and others were involved with traffic patterns."

Meek points out that his group worked with John Hanley and Steve Butwin of the Vigo County Area Planning Department, with Levin, and with other representatives of private industry to gain ideas for the proposal.

"Although the over-all plan was really judged as too expensive for the downtown merchants to finance right now, I think that our presentations went over well," Meek concluded.

Assisting Meek in the study were John Anslinger, Jerry Bailey, David Drzewiecki, and David Finrock.

Dr Iryin P. Hooper was the instructor of the class for which the proposal was prepared and he notes, "I am pleased with the report. They (the group members) did a great deal of work that does not show in the report."

"There are some deficiencies in terms of financing and I think the group members became

aware of these when they made a presentation to Rose-Hulman's Board of Associates."

The board, comprised of several local businessmen, reviewed the report because of its direct concern with Terre Haute.

The engineering systems design course is a part of a sequence of classes required by senior mechanical engineering students. The course seeks to involve students in putting together various engineering and social elements to accomplish an overall purpose. Other groups have planned water treatment plants, cities, and self-sufficient retirement islands.

In outlining the project the group determined that an increase of 30 per cent in total sales would be achieved by downtown merchants in the first year of the mall's existence.

The facility would include the blocks on either side of Wabash Avenue from Third to Seventh streets. The mall would be open air and restricted to pedestrian traffic, except for emergency vehicles and merchandising trucks.

Every intersection along the walkway would have mini-parks with trees, shrubbery, and ground cover — similar in concept to the current Downtown Beautification Project.

An enclosed sidewalk system would extend throughout the area, consisting of aluminum and plate glass divider panels and an aluminum awning.

To allow for the easiest traffic flow, signalization of the area to provide maximum flow efficiency would be made and on-street parking and loading in the vicinity would be prohibited.

To accommodate needed parking (estimates show that at the current time the area is deficient by almost 500 parking spaces during peak time and that with a mall even more parking spaces would be needed), two multi-level garages are proposed.

One, at Seventh and Wabash, would include four levels and facilitate 450 autos. The other, at Fourth and Ohio Streets, would have six tiers, and serve up to 300 cars.

As noted, the mall would presumably be called the Old National Shopping Mall and stores fronts would hopefully be remodeled to resemble

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buildings of the past.

Cost of the entire project includes \$1.8 million for the parking garages (construction costs only), road work at \$100,000, and mall sidewalks at \$350,000.

The total of \$2.3 million (which does not include all necessary land acquisition), could presumably be paid through Federal funds and by the merchants who would hopefully experience substantial increases in sales and profit.

Businessmen who have seen the plan generally agree that the proposal presents several innovative ideas that deserve consideration.

Most agree with Hooper, who notes, "While I see a lot of deficiencies, I see a lot of work that may deserve some future thought by planners."

City Planning (Tut.)
ours—Sp MAY 7 1977

Hope for Community Affairs File downtown

For 20 years there has been talk about the need for a plan to save downtown Terre Haute. And that is all there has been--talk.

The focus has changed over the years. Two decades ago, a few men saw the inexorable trend to shopping centers and tried to interest others in preventive measures before downtown lost Sears and Wards and the other major traffic builders.

But downtown was still prosperous and there were too many independent fiefdoms. Of course, Sears and Wards and many others have gone and plans to save the survivors were talked about periodically, but nothing was done.

To their credit, Sidney Levin, then president of the Downtown Business Association, and Mayor William Brighton took initiative two years ago with a plan to "beautify" Wabash Avenue. While many difficulties were encountered, the plan was ready to be implemented when a group of local leaders questioned whether it was a cure or a band-aid.

That questioning has led to the involvement of Dr. John Logan, the retired president of Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, as head of a task force to face the fundamental questions about the future of the downtown area.

Dr. Logan promises to get some of the best city planning men in the country to look at Terre Haute and hopefully come up with viable solutions.

The future of downtown is not as bleak as many would paint it. It is adjacent to a major university; it is a governmental and law center; the new public library will be built there; with the Hulman Civic-University Center, it is a sports and entertainment focus.

In short, there is something to build on. Dr. Logan and the committee have the wherewithal to take on a difficult task and complete it successfully.

They deserve the support of the entire community in this effort, since a city without a center is really not a city at all.

After two decades of talking, there is reason to believe that action is just around the corner. It CAN be done!

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Community Affairs File

City Planning (T.H.)

S AUG 13 1977

The City: Accepts An Opportunity

Community Affairs File

The new downtown plan of Terre Haute Civic Improvement, Inc. recognizes change and makes the most of it.

As one drives about the city there is noted constant improvement. Small businesses have spread out but are spotted in numerous easily-reached locations. This is in addition to the more noticeable big shopping centers.

But, as we cross and re-cross the city on our many errands, we also are aware of one unchanging fact: The central portion remains the most easily reached and most convenient for many purposes.

The shopping centers, built where large areas were available for parking by thousands of cars, necessarily were located where such acreage was available. As a result, many businesses have moved or established additional locations in or near these shopping centers.

But other businesses, which do not require such large amounts of parking, have remained in their downtown or near-downtown locations. These include a number of financial institutions.

And a number of the city's traditionally leading mercantile establishments have retained their downtown locations as well.

The partial outflow has eased the parking situation for those who remain. Downtown parking lots are well patronized, thanks of course in large measure to the "Park and Shop" program whereby the stores provide free parking for their customers.

As a result of the change over the past generation the central city, once crowded with tall buildings, has been opened up to light and air and to additional parking. One of the latest of these open spaces is that adjacent to the First National Bank, the former Kresge site.

The new downtown plan aims at more standardization of the parking situation and improvement of the appearance of the district. During the period of change there has been a constant effort to bring this about, but there also has been uncertainty. Now much of this has been removed and more definite planning can take place.

Prof. Duane Sorensen, who has been made project director-coordinator for the plan, has announced engagement of the James Associates of Indianapolis and Landplus West of Muncie to work on the first phase of the plan, hopefully with the assistance of federal funds. This Phase I would be a demonstration project showing the basic goals of beautification, walkways for pedestrians and improved parking facilities.

The possibilities and opportunity for the transformation of the downtown into a place of beauty as well as convenience are here. The general philosophy of the over-all 10-year plan hopefully soon will be demonstrated.

New thinking and new approaches are being utilized for the improvement of the downtown, Terre Haute's basic center.

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Firms Start Downtown Plan

Community Affairs File

S. AUG. 14 1977
By GLADYS SELTZER
Star Staff Writer

City Planning (T.H.) - Terre Haute Civic Improvement

An Indianapolis and a Muncie firm have been retained by Terre Haute Civic Improvement, Inc., to work on plans for the first project to be undertaken by the not-for-profit improvement group, according to a report Wednesday by Professor Duane Sorensen, project director coordinator for the plan.

He said the James Associates architectural firm with headquarters in Indianapolis and Landplus West, landscape architects and land planners with headquarters in Muncie, will work as a joint entity and this first project in Phase I of the 10-year development plan for downtown Terre Haute will be referred to as a demonstration project.

"We have the opportunity for local public works funds from the Economic Development Administration for capital investment only and have to have the

application to the Chicago office by Aug. 20," Professor Sorensen explained. "The Chicago office of the Economic Development Administration has a maximum of 30 days for review, and after that the local office has 90 days in which to make engineering drawings and begin construction, weather permitting."

The two firms were selected from eight firms interviewed by Terre Haute Civic Improvement and chosen because of their "breadth, depth and resources," Sorensen added.

Four members of the Landplus West team arrived in Terre Haute Tuesday and met with the executive board of the civic group. This team, which will be augmented by three more individuals, will review all of the materials prepared earlier this Summer by Richard Dober and Associates of Cambridge, Mass., and identify just where the first project will be and what form and structure it

will take. After this team formulates the basic concepts and preliminary design, James Associates will proceed with the pure architectural and engineering requirements.

Sorensen indicated construction "might begin" late this Fall, although progress, once the Chicago office approves the application, will depend "to a great extent" on the weather.

He also said "we are looking to see if we can coordinate this with some other effort," notably some private businesses now doing some planning and with any planning by Indiana State University.

"We want high visibility, high usage and high impact for the first project in the downtown area, and we are trying to include all elements such as walkways and street parking," Sorensen added. "We expect by next week to be able to announce just what the initial project will be and details about it."

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Community Affairs File

Streetscape-parking first

Design firms named for project

city plan (74)
T AUG 11 1977

Two design firms have been selected to begin the first phase of the streetscape-parking program for downtown improvement.

Terre Haute Civic Improvement, Inc. retained the services of James Associates of Indianapolis and Landplus West of Muncie to implement the plan adopted by the organization on June 30.

Duane Sorensen, project coordinator, said the two firms would work together for the first project of major plans for re-vamping the downtown area.

According to Dr. John A. Logan, chairman of the organization, the firms were selected because of their depth of experience in several communities with similar projects. A team of four professionals from Landplus West is currently in Terre Haute having evaluated the strategy plan and are identifying

specific parameters associated with the location of the demonstration project.

Dr. Logan said, "Time is of the essence in that this project is to be funded by local Public Works funds administered by the Economic Development Administration. We have a deadline of 15 days, terminating Aug. 20, to have the preliminary drawings and application in the Chicago EDA office in order to qualify for the capital investment monies."

The Chicago office has a maximum of 30 days for review and after that the local office has 90 days in which to make engineering drawings and begin construction within the limits of weather conditions.

Actual construction may begin late this fall with assistance from the weather.

Specific attention is being made to coordinate the demonstration project with other efforts currently in the planning stage by private business in the downtown area and with potential development efforts of Indiana State University. A definitive criteria placed upon the initial project by the Executive Board is that it be highly visible, maintain high usage and have a definitive impact upon the downtown area.

"It is important to realize that this is the first of many similar projects in our ongoing five to ten year program," Logan said. He added, "This is an exciting beginning to our implementation of the Dober plan and we are receiving full cooperation from everyone including the private sector, the city administration, city council and Indiana State University."

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Community Affairs File

Downtown Renovation To Begin

S OCT 4 1977

City Planning (T.H.)

By GLADYS SELTZER
Star Staff Writer

Weather permitting, actual beginning of construction work for Phase I of the downtown improvement project hopefully will begin in the next 90 days at Sixth Street and Wabash Avenue, according to information released Monday morning during the press conference which followed the 7:30 a.m. meeting of the board of directors of Terre Haute Civic Improvement, Inc., at the Link Building of Indiana State University.

Mayor William Brighton and Professor Duane Sorensen, executive director of the Terre Haute Civic Improvement, fielded questions and introduced Stan Geda, senior principal, and Tom Sterns, junior principal, of Landplus West, Inc., members of the Muncie

landscape architectural and planning firm which will work with the group.

Mayor Brighton explained he expected within the next few days "official notification" from the U.S. Economic Development Administration of the approval of \$347,000 for the project, following confirmation last week from Senator Birch Bayh that these funds had been approved.

Sorensen said he hopes working drawings of plans for streetscaping, with emphasis on pedestrian traffic, will be ready by the end of November, after which bids will be advertised. Then, weather permitting, work will begin and expand in four directions, with completion of Phase I anticipated for Spring or early Summer.

Mayor Brighton noted in addition to the

\$347,000 in federal funds, \$110,000 also has been contributed by the downtown group.

"It is important that Phase I be successful so this will encourage private business and private investment in the project and we're talking about a seven, eight or 10-year project," Mayor Brighton added.

Sorensen said "lots of time" has been spent on investigating the streetscape program and he expected his group to "rely heavily" on citizen input as the designing process now beginning goes into the final stage. He said meetings will be scheduled with interested groups under the "basic philosophy" that downtown improvement, initiated last April by a group of business and civic leaders, is a "community project."

The executive director said at present there are "several other projects in the works" relative to the broad outlines of the plan submitted earlier by Richard Dober and Associates, Massachusetts planning firm which submitted a three-phase strategy.

Geda said Landplus West was "refining" the Dober data and taking many photographs of the area. The design scheme needs to be spelled out in about three weeks, he added.

Mayor Brighton also emphasized the point that the improvement project is a "total cooperative effort between Indiana State University, the downtown sector and the city of Terre Haute."

Sorensen said his group had "some input" into the plans of the Terre Haute Savings Bank in connection with the bank's landscaping of the parking lot adjacent to the bank.

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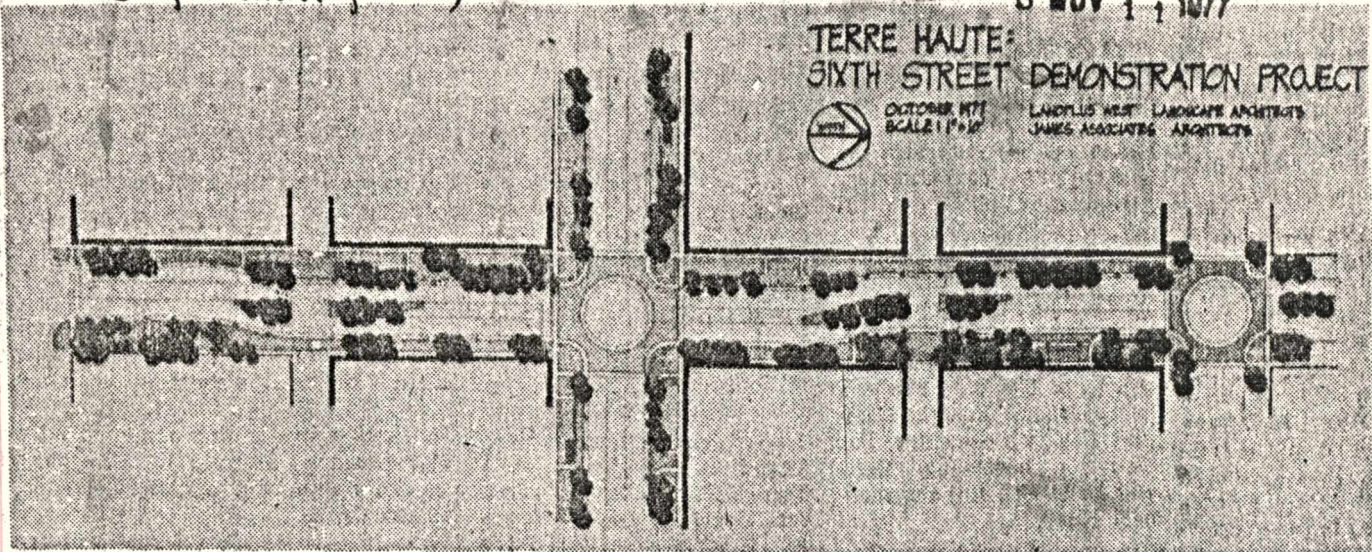
TERRE HAUTE:
SIXTH STREET

DEMONSTRATION PROJECT



OCTOBER 1977
SCALE 1"=10'

LANDPLUS WEST LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
JAMES ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS



GLIMPSE OF FUTURE FOR DOWNTOWN — Reproduced here is the schematic design developed by Landplus West of Muncie for the initial demonstration project in Phase I of the long-range plans for revitalization of downtown Terre Haute initiated in April by Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc. The demonstration project will involve the area north from Ohio Street along Sixth Street to the north side of Cherry Street and will be basically a streetscape plan. Prof. Duane Sorensen, Civic Improvement executive director, has announced that

the specific design plan will be on display from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday in the lobby of the Conference Center, Sixth and Cherry Streets, so that citizens can see the plans and hopefully make suggestions and comments. Members of the staff of the Center for Economic Development, of which Sorensen is director, will be present to talk with interested persons. Weather permitting, construction is expected to begin Jan. 7.

(Star Photo: Chaney)

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Community Affairs File

Civic Improvement committees formed

City Planning (T.H.) S FEB 29 1978

Community Affairs File

Special committees were formed Monday by Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc. to explore further aspects of the downtown area improvements.

The organization met in a breakfast meeting to update members on current progress.

A committee composed of Dr. Richard Landini, Forrest Sherer, J. Kenneth Moulton, Benjamin Cox, James Sullivan and Paul Pfister is to study further property development in downtown.

The Indiana State University Foundation recently acquired two properties in the downtown area, the eastern portion of the old Roots Store and the building which houses a card store and the previously adjacent carpet store. Landini, ISU president, has announced the university intends to use the property in cooperation with the civic improvement group for the betterment of the area.

Another committee of Dr. John Logan, Lucien Meis and Duane Sorenson is to discuss with Hulman and Company officials the plans for the old bus station and other buildings on the north side of Wabash Avenue between Eighth and Ninth streets.

In other business, it was announced the Sixth Street demonstration project for downtown improvement is to get under way on April 1. The project was delayed once due to inadequate funds for the submitted bids.

Also, Sorenson said work is being done with the Terre Haute Department of Redevelopment in an effort to obtain Department of Housing and Urban Development monies for use in the work of the organization.

Sorenson explained major funds also are available from Equitable Life for urban de-

velopment in the state. He said a plan for capital facilities and capital development must be completed first.

Sorenson reported a traffic and transportation design should be developed for the downtown area as soon as the weather breaks and the local merchants resume regular schedules after the energy crisis. He explained the traffic and transportation patterns are not normal now due to these two factors.

Landini said ISU is working in cooperation with the downtown improvement plan to improve the campus environment. He said Landplus West, the firm which did the planning for the Sixth Street demonstration project, also is working on plans for the campus.

Landini emphasized he wanted to dispell rumors the university wants to close any portions of Fourth, Fifth, Seventh, Eighth or Ninth streets. He said possibly future plans may call for requests of such action on Sixth and Chestnut streets on the campus, though.

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Community briefed on progress; Chamber announces relocation

MAR 2 1976

City Planning (T.H.) - T.H. Civic Improvement
Chamber of Commerce (T.H.)

By PATRICK J. BARNES
Tribune Staff Writer

Necessary steps must be taken to stop the decay of the downtown area in Terre Haute, according to Duane Sorensen, director of the Center for Economic Development at Indiana State University and executive director of Terre Haute Civic Improvement, Inc.

Sorensen was one of five speakers to address a community progress briefing Wednesday at Howard Johnson Motel. The program, sponsored by the ISU School of Business, heard addresses from Larry Lidster, executive director of the Terre Haute Area Chamber of Commerce; Dr. Alan C. Rankin, special assistant to ISU President Richard G. Landini; Robert Bishop, president of the Terre Haute Committee for Area Progress, and Dr. Michael H. Mescon, college of business administration at Georgia State University, Atlanta.

In outlining the role of Terre Haute Civic Improvement, Inc., Sorensen said, "we identified the downtown problem as a community problem. The retail area may continue to shrink and we must accept this fact."

The non-profit organization formed last spring by civic and business leaders, has a primary overall goal to revitalize downtown Terre Haute, according to Sorensen.

Part of the long range revitalization plan, Sorensen said, is completion of the Sixth Street Improvement Project. Bids

for that project were rejected several months ago and have been readvertised. The new bids are scheduled to be opened next week.

Other current and future projects of the organization include: development of the Ritter and Hudson properties on Wabash Avenue between Sixth and Seventh streets for controlled development of open space, offices and parking; completion of the the Deming Hotel project and Terre Haute House as housing for the elderly; resurfacing and landscaping of an existing parking lot on Cherry Street and the demolition of several buildings on the northwest corner of Seventh and Cherry streets to make way for a parking lot.

Sorensen also pointed out there is a possibility that a motor hotel may be constructed in the area near Hulman Civic University Center.

"For the first time in 10 years I see cooperation from all sectors in Terre Haute working together in one direction. People believe the revitalization is going to work. We need citizen input. If we're not interested then we're not concerned about our community," Sorensen said.

Lidster told the group, "the Chamber has not taken nearly an active enough role in downtown improvements in the past."

Recapitulating his first 10 weeks as the Chamber's executive director, Lidster said he already has been faced with several problems: the city's air pollu-

tion regulations, the economic impact on the community as a result of the coal strike and the energy curtailments.

During his address, Lidster announced the offices of the Chamber will be moved sometime in April.

The new facilities will be located on the southside of the R. Jerome Kearns and Donn R. Gossom Jr. law firm building at 76 Ohio St.

In other remarks, Lidster said the Chamber board of directors will meet probably the first week of April to write a "working program" for the Chamber.

Rankin, appeared as spokesman for Program Leadership Terre Haute.

Rankin said that Leadership Terre Haute will select a group of leaders in the community who can come together to meet with existing leadership to understand what are the community problems and how can they be solved. He emphasized the group will not be political, a booster or promotion group or an advocate of any one interest.

"Positive thinking and leadership is the solution to our community problems. The future of Terre Haute is very bright," Rankin said.

Bishop gave a brief history of the Terre Haute Committee for Area Progress and how it obtained and developed the Tumpane property on north Fruitridge Avenue.

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Award Contracts For Downtown

3 MAR 16 1978

By GLADYS SELTZER
Star Staff Writer

Progressive Construction and Engineering Co., Inc., 118 S. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ St., Wednesday was awarded the contract for general construction for the Sixth Street Improvement Project during the meeting of the Terre Haute Board of Works and Safety.

The contract for landscaping was awarded to Doug Wearren Nurseries, Jeffersontown, Ky.

The construction firm received the contract for its base bid without land-

scaping of \$284,212. The bid also included three alternates which will be negotiated later, according to James Burdick, city engineer. Alternate one added \$28,188, alternate three, \$39,659, and alternate two deducted \$1,727.

The Wearren Nurseries had a total base bid of \$36,445.45, with alternate one adding \$3,577.40, alternate three adding \$3,702 and alternate two adding \$3,472.

Burdick said there will be negotiations later for these alternates.

The Sixth Street Improvement Project will encompass the area on

Sixth Street from Ohio Street to the north side of Cherry Street. The Project is part of Phase I of longrange downtown improvement plans sponsored by Terre Haute Civic Improvement, Inc., a not-for-profit group interested in revitalization of the entire downtown area.

A grant of \$347,000 from the Economic Development Administration and a contribution of \$110,000 from Civic Improvement is available for the project.

Burdick said some work must be in progress by April 1. The bids were

opened last Friday.

Landplus West, Muncie landscape architectural and planning firm, designed plans for improvement and beautification which included flushed curbing at the street crossings, walkways, and attractive bus shelters near the northwest and southeast corners of Wabash Avenue. A number of trees are included in the design drawings.

Professor Duane Sorensen, executive director for Terre Haute Civic Improvement, had pointed out the area was chosen for the demonstration project because it is a middle of the road interface with Indiana State University and the former Deming Hotel at Sixth and Cherry Streets. The hotel is to be remodeled into housing for the elderly and Sorensen indicated last month work on this particular project might begin soon.

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Community Affairs File

Vigo County Public Library

Break Ground For Initial Phase Of Downtown Project

Asphalt breaking for the Sixth Street Improvement Project took place Monday afternoon when representatives of Terre Haute Civic Improvement, Inc., and business interests took turns briefly to operate the jackhammer at the northwest corner of the Sixth Street and Wabash Avenue intersection.

Those present included Dr. John A. Logan, chairman of the board of the improvement group which about a year ago initiated the three-phase effort to rehabilitate and revitalize downtown Terre Haute, and Prof. Duane Sorensen, the group's executive director.

The Improvement Project will involve primarily street scaping and improving the area from Sixth Street and Wabash Avenue to Cherry Street, and east and west to some extent on Wabash Avenue.

Others present Monday included Mayor William J. Brighton; Lawrence Lidster, executive vice president of the Terre Haute Area Chamber of Commerce; Steve Owens, president of the Downtown Business Association; Vernie Potter, president of Progressive Construction Co. which will do the work, and Stan Geda of Land-plus West, the Muncie firm which designed the improvement plan.

Potter said the next step will be to mark off locations of the work plan, but a "lot of detail" is still to be worked out. Parking meters have been removed and some breaking of the curbing along Sixth Street has been done.

Sorensen told The Star that "we're taking a look at comprehensive plans now for the entire downtown area." Geda indicated that in about six

weeks or so he hoped to have another series of public meetings, similar to those which preceded the completion of the drawings for the present improvement project, to get input from the citizens on their ideas

about plans from the river to the Louisville and Nashville Railroad tracks. Then his firm and James Associates will develop an overall, schematic plan, after which the specifics will be developed, Geda said.

APR 4 1978

City Planning (TH) Community Affairs File

No completion date offered on project

T OCT 5 1978

By **ROB ALLEN**
Tribune Staff Writer

Construction continues on the Sixth Street Demonstration Project and progress is said to be "going along well," but officials hesitate to predict a completion date.

Dr. John Logan, chairman of the board of Terre Haute Improvement Inc., said the board is to have a meeting Monday morning and a progress report is expected.

Logan said the Sixth Street project got behind schedule, but progress is continuing now.

Joseph Yuza, project coordinator with Progressive Construction and Engineering Co. Inc., said Wednesday he hesitates to predict a completion date because "you don't know what problems may develop."

However, Yuza said he still expects "our part to be done in early November," and he said that would be "right on schedule." Yuza noted that progress at the site will be a "cooperative thing from here on out."

Workers should be laying bricks by the first of next week, he said — "We have word that the brick is en route from Ohio now," Yuza noted.

Demolition work is under way on Wabash Avenue, but concrete cannot be placed until the traffic signals are taken care of "by the signal people," Yuza continued.

Nursery work, which involves trees and shrubs, should get started Oct. 20. "And should be finished in about a week," Yuza said. He noted that the nursery work will be done in two or three different phases.

"When the nursery work is done," Yuza commented, "it will be a great transformation on that block."

Problems encountered during demolition of Sixth Street between Wabash and Cherry included "six generations of pavements," Yuza said. "The experience gained from the demolition there should help on Wabash," he noted.

"If we don't unveil any other problems, we should continue right on schedule."

Yuza encouraged local residents to visit the site and observe construction progress. He noted the demonstration project is the first phase of a possible overall downtown improvement effort.

Logan said discussion on further aspects of downtown improvement is expected at the Monday meeting.

REFERENCE

Vigo County Public Library

Community Affairs File

Planning Department Top Priority For City: Report

City Planning (TH)

DEC 15 1978

By GLADYS SELTZER
Star Staff Writer

Establishment of a city planning department should have "top priority" in any planning for Terre Haute, according to Jim Burns, planning consultant whose study on the future of downtown Terre Haute has been completed and distributed to members of the Terre Haute Civic Improvement Association, Inc., and the Terre Haute Housing Authority.

Burns prepared the 29-page report on possible future directions for the city after he conducted a week-long series of public meetings and planning workshops this Fall as well as many interviews with those concerned about the downtown's future, meetings and interviews with civic officials and agencies, and personal observation and study of past, present and potential future conditions in the downtown area.

In a prior report of April, 1977, Burns stated Terre Haute is "unique for a city of its size and needs in not having a city planning department." This lack still exists and, he believes "is working to the detriment of the community." Such a department would be of "great assistance in seeing that plans are made comprehensively, with knowledge of all related consequences on a citywide basis."

Throughout the report, Burns emphasizes the fact Terre Haute abounds with "myriad potentials for reusing and recycling valuable existing environmental/economic resources" and he warns against "tunnel vision" or "planning by pieces" which processes, he believes, caused a number of "tragic mistakes" for cities in "misguided" redevelopment attempts of the 1960's and 1970's.

To see downtown as "just real estate," or just as a profit producer for merchants," or as any "one place" entity, is to "deny the reality of this complex, intricate multifarious mix of economic, pyhsical, legal, cultural, social, personal, historic qualities and quantities" which make the downtown city, Burns declares. In his opinion, the people in the Terre Haute workshops perceived the value of rediscovering and reusing urban resources and of "combining them with needed new construction" and "stated their willingness to work together and upgrade their own environment."

First off, Burns' report states, Terre Haute needs a new, detailed plan for parking and it "should be the responsibility of a new parking authority with the 'teeth' to institute change, establish qualitative and quantitative controls for downtown parking, and guarantee consumer and environmental protection in all areas concerning parking."

An "efficient combination of pedestrian and vehicular access" seems to be the

appropriate goal for Terre Haute, rather than a closed-off, pedestrian mall. Burns commended several recommendations made for a "convenient loop mini-bus system serving downtown" and he noted such a mini-transit system would "solve the annoying crowding, noise and pollution problems caused by the large transit buses that currently stack up all along Seventh Street and on both sides of Wabash Avenue."

All towns need "main corners," and for Terre Haute, these are at Seventh Street and Wabash Avenue, in Burns' opinion.

He cited three plans which emerged from the Oct. 20 workshop. These included specific suggestions to open Wabash Avenue east and west; provision for a phased stop-turn light system and turn lane off Third Street south onto Wabash Avenue, and increasing of access from the west on U.S. 40 through the Y-detour at the City Hall and Court House complex.

Need was expressed for a major north-south street in addition to Third Street to provide access to downtown, with the suggestion Thirteenth Street would be best; there would be need for a new off ramp from I-70 to give convenient access to downtown.

Burns suggests "prime opportunity" exists for an urban plaza at Seventh Street and Wabash Avenue on the eastern end of the present parking lot which would make a "magnificent site" for such a plaza.

"The facade of the Terre Haute House and the side elevation of the post office (with its truck docks screened by landscaping) make the enclosure and containment of this space a very exciting urban experience," Burns writes, "and the design of landscaping, fountains and perhaps an amphitheater here, with related seating, lighting and public facilities, can make Terre Haute Plaza (or Wabash Plaza, if that is preferred) a splendid focal point for downtown, situated right at its crossroads."

There was "general support" for the concept of a new hotel-convention facility on Wabash Avenue between Seventh and Ninth streets, the report states. It is Burns' recommendation the Terre Haute House be converted to this use rather than the structure's being rehabilitated for housing for the elderly. Burns calls the Terre Haute House the "most significant older structure in downtown Terre Haute with the exception of the Court House." The hotel, he believes, stands at the "main crossroads of the community," is across from a "potential major urban pizza," and is in "ideal relationship" to both the Hulman Civic University Center, Indiana State University facilities and within its block "lie the major possibilities of expansion and development."

It is "likely," Burns states, such con-

related areas would be "less costly" than designing and constructing an all-new motor hotel-convention facility.

Should the Terre Haute House become such a convention center, Burns proposes the block just east on Wabash Avenue would be an "appropriate" site for housing for the elderly who would then be in close contact with the "renewed vitality" of downtown.

Burns suggests, therefore, the decision on the existing proposal for an all-elderly housing development be re-thought, and the idea of a "mixed tenancy complex" be explored. There are those in addition to the elderly who would like to live downtown and who have been "looking for an urban complex in which to live," he continues.

"University personnel, those who work downtown and others can join with older residents in enjoying the interest and vivacity of a varied population, not just a particular group (of people) who have been 'segregated' by age into living in a specific place," Burns states. "By providing housing for people of different ages, interests and pursuits, downtown will begin to take on new life 'round the clock and provide people with new alternatives and opportunities for living and working."

Community Affairs File

Vigo County Public Library

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Terre Haute House As Convention Center?

Editor's note — The following is the second in a series of articles concerning a San Francisco planner's proposals for the revitalization of Terre Haute's downtown area. The first appeared in Friday's editions of The Star.

By GLADYS SELTZER
Star Staff Writer

In his report on the future of downtown Terre Haute, San Francisco planning consultant Jim Burns has suggested use of the present Terre Haute House as a hotel-motel, convention center and use of a site east on Wabash Avenue for elderly housing rather than the Terre Haute House.

Burns prepared the 29-page report on possible future directions for the city after he conducted this fall a week-long series of public meetings, planning sessions and interviews. The report has been distributed to members of Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc. and the Terre Haute Housing Authority.

Burns believes the idea should be explored of a "mixed tenancy," of serving not only the elderly but others who would like to live in an urban setting and use facilities envisioned in a downtown improvement plan. He projects the idea of a conversion of the present parking lot and garage of the Terre Haute House into a triple-decked structure to accommodate transient parking and parking for users of downtown and the civic center.

He suggests a feasibility study on use of other structures on the site toward Eighth Street. His report states it would be desirable to retain the old Fort Harrison building as an "elegant restaurant or palm court for the hotel." Within the Terre Haute House, the "great ground floor ballroom should be brought back to its original splendor," Burns suggests, and atop the hotel, a "fine restaurant and cabaret could occupy parts of the ninth and or 10th floors."

Burns believes the "fortuitous curve" on Wabash Avenue near Ninth Street can be capitalized on by "increasing the potentials of the Early Wheels Museum" into a "greatly refurbished and enlarged automobile and historical museum on the site." An enlarged museum, in addition to housing the full car collection, could house other historic and cultural artifacts, Burns believes, and provide a "fitting tribute" to the late Anton Hulman Jr., as well as forming a "dramatic focus" for the eastern end of Wabash Avenue.

General consensus of those at the workshops on civic improvement directed this fall by Burns, he states, was they would like the western end of Wabash Avenue opened. He thinks this economically desirable because it would permit Illinois residents ease of access into downtown. Such action is also "historically desirable" because this would restore the "linear integrity" of the old National Road, the first coast-to-coast highway in the United States connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Workshop participants suggested a tunnel beneath Wabash Avenue from any new courts-police-jail complex to the north of the courthouse would provide security for transfer of prisoners back and forth. Then if Wabash Avenue were to resume its connection with the rest of U.S. Highway 40, Burns points out, the curved portions of Cherry and Ohio streets would serve as "ideal accessways" to the governmental complex.

In the section on conversion and reuse of "valuable existing environmental/economic resources," Burns mentions possible use of the main branch of the Terre Haute First National Bank on Wabash Avenue as a "top-quality restaurant, an enterprise desperately needed in downtown."

Don Smith, president of the bank, told The Star he sees this as a possibility to serve not only local

residents but those in a wide radius in the surrounding area because hopefully this would be a "quality attraction." He was most emphatic about the fact the building should be preserved. Burns agrees "wholeheartedly" because, he notes, such a use would conserve an "important and extremely handsome structure and answer a specific urban requirement."

Burns' report also projects the idea of the First National branch in the next block west as a "superb site" for a store featuring "high-style interior design fabrics, furnishing and artifacts, including possibly a small commercial art gallery."

Smith said if this structure is sound construction-wise and aesthetically, it should remain for present use or "whatever else would enhance the overall plan."

"Such ideas are not even in the planning stage and only in the thinking stage," he declared emphatically. "If all factors were right, it would be a major step for us to build a new facility (for banking needs). There are absolutely no specific plans for such a project at this time. Such a decision would have to be made by the total bank management and the board."

"We are very much interested in the Burns report," he added, "and are definitely committed to the downtown area and its future."

Smith was also emphatic in stating "we have to be very conscious of all the merchants (in downtown) and we can't displace anybody unless we can offer an alternative suitable to them."

In comment about the Merchants National Bank building, Executive Vice President and Trust Officer Robert Boyer said at the present time the bank has "adequate banking facilities in the building at Seventh and Wabash, including room for expansion."

"We continually have under review

possibilities for more parking space for customers," Boyer continued. "However, we want to make it clear we want to be a part of any expansion of the downtown area. So the bank is a candidate for considering newer and fresher quarters for the main office."

It was Burns' comment in the report the upper floors of the bank should be kept as office space while the bank spaces on the ground floor "would lend themselves ideally to an exclusive men/women's clothing store."

Boyer also said what will happen to the Terre Haute House is "an important aspect of the bank's planning."

"When it comes to private investment for any kind of project, it has to make sense," he declared. "It is easy for people to suggest how to spend other people's money. We have to be in a position to consider all aspects. We're behind the general concept (of downtown improvement) and have already participated."

Lucien Meis, president of Meis stores, in his comment said, "We're satisfied with our business in downtown Terre Haute, and we constantly re-evaluate the situation on a monthly and quarterly basis."

"We hope a major project involving the Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) will get off the ground so that we may possibly be a part of that project."

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Community Affairs File

Vigo County Public Library

\$1 million grant approved for city

Thurs. Jan 4, 1979

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff Writer

The \$1 million federal grant approved for part of the downtown revitalization is to be used mostly for rehabilitation of owner-occupied homes, according to a release from Mayor William J. Brighton's office.

On Wednesday afternoon, Sen. Birch Bayh's office notified the TRIBUNE that the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development had approved a \$1 million Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) for rehabilitation of houses in the perimeter of the downtown area.

According to HUD, the grant is to be matched by \$4 million in funds from the private sector of the community. However, a statement released from Brighton's office Thursday morning said the private match would be \$9 million in "extremely low interest" loans.

The announcement of the grant approval to Bayh was made from the White House, according to reports.

Of the total \$10 million project, \$1 million will be dedicated to commercial rehabilitation and \$9 million will go for the owner-occupied housing units, according to the mayor's statement.

A total of 304 new construction jobs are expected in the rehabilitation project.

The area covered under the grant is bounded by the Wabash River on the west, Third Avenue on the north, 17th Street on the east, and College Avenue on the south.

Commitments on loans for the rehabilitation have been received from Central Federal Savings and Loan, Indiana Savings and Loan, Merchants

City Planning (UDAG grant)

More inside—

The \$1 million grant from UDAG is just one in a series of recent downtown developments. Find out more about the project on Page 5.

The inside report also includes information on recommendations for the future direction of Terre Haute's downtown from Jim Burns, a San Francisco planning consultant.

Savings Association, Mutual Federal Savings and Loan, Wabash Fort Harrison Federal Saving and Loan and the J.B. Pfister Co., according to the mayor's office.

Monies for the program are to be administered through the Terre Haute Housing Authority which helped submit the grant application for the city.

Information on how to apply for the money will be made public within the next 30 days, according to a spokesman for the mayor. Certain federal guidelines have to be met in administering the funds, the spokesman said.

It was explained that the program is for homes occupied by the owner. For example, a landlord renting out a house in which he did not live could not apply for money under the program, according to the spokesman.

The grant announced Wednesday is the first part of a three-part UDAG phase, according to the mayor's statement. Additional UDAG funding for downtown improvement will be

sought by the city in upcoming quarters of the program, the statement indicated.

The next phase of the downtown improvement project would be the rehabilitation of buildings in the downtown commercial area, according to John A. Logan, executive director of Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc.

Hopefully, a grant application for the second phase could be submitted to federal authorities within the next three months, Logan said.

The third phase of the downtown project would be a motel-convention center complex, Logan said.

"With the success of this first phase, I am hopeful that more people will now be willing to join our efforts to rehabilitate the downtown which is the very heart of our tax base in Terre Haute," the mayor was quoted as saying.

The city's original application for a UDAG grant included the commercial rehabilitation and the motel-convention center, according to Logan. However, it was decided to only seek the residential rehabilitation money in the current funding stage, Logan explained.

"We are looking down the road at the possibility of a a downtown motor/hotel, considerable commercial expansion and perhaps additional residential renovation," the mayor said.

Various groups were recognized for their work in helping obtain the federal grant. They included the Housing Authority, Terre Haute Civic Improvement and the Indiana State University Center for Economic Development.

City Planning (T.H.)

Improving downtown: We shouldn't give up

JAN 28 1979
During The TRIBUNE's recent "priorities" survey, a large number of readers indicated an interest in the future of downtown Terre Haute.

The survey, conducted earlier this month, sought opinions from readers as to what the major priorities for Terre Haute and Vigo County should be in 1979.

Twenty-one percent of those responding to the survey said they believed efforts to improve the downtown area should continue. Most pointed to the work currently being done for downtown revitalization. So many people mentioned downtown improvement, in fact, that it ranked fifth in the overall priorities ratings.

Note should also be made, however, that ranked 14th on the priority survey was "stop the downtown improvement project." Eleven percent of the respondents in the survey said downtown was dead and no amount of work could save it. Most said the money devoted to improving downtown could be better spent in other ways.

We firmly agree with the 21 percent who believe efforts should continue to improve the downtown area. It is true several businesses have left downtown recently. It is also true some residents prefer to shop at shopping centers where parking is easier and free.

This, however, does not mean we should abandon downtown. Firm steps have been taken to keep downtown alive. Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc. was formed to investigate ways to save the downtown region.

As a result of the work of Terre Haute Civic Improvement and other agencies, Terre Haute has received a \$1 million federal grant to help offset loan charges for the rehabilitation of homes in the central city.

And, we are told, other grants will be sought for the rehabilitation of buildings in the downtown commercial area. A third phase of the downtown program would encourage a motel-convention center complex in the area.

We support improvement of downtown — and we encourage the public to do likewise. Public input in such an undertaking is essential and we urge all of our readers to become involved in the effort.

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Vigo County Public Library

Community Ass'n 1979

Sixth Street Project's Deterioration

MAR 23 1979

By GLADYS SELTZER
Star Staff Writer

Deteriorating pavement on the intersection circle at Sixth Street and Wabash Avenue is a "temporary situation" and will be replaced this spring, according to a report during the public meeting Thursday morning sponsored by Terre Civic Improvement, Inc. to discuss "revised objectives" for downtown revitalization.

The statement came from Stan Geda of Landplus West, Muncie architect and landscape planning firm which designed the Sixth Street Project extending from Cherry Street to Wabash Avenue along Sixth Street.

He was one of several speakers at the two-hour meeting attended by some 45 persons including members of the sponsoring group and interested citizens. Other speakers were James Wines, New York City environmental architecture and sculpture; Prof. William Pickett, chairman of the Civic Improvement architectural commission and president of the Vigo County Historical Society, and William Schaller, chairman of the Civic Improvement parking commission and transportation planner for West Central Indiana Economic Development District.

Dr. John A. Logan, chairman of Terre Haute Civic Improvement, conducted the meeting and presented current objectives of the organization formed in the spring of 1977. These remain basically what they were, although Logan listed 16 points in detail.

The area in the plan will extend from the Wabash River to the L & N tracks and from Indiana State University south to Poplar Street.

A "key factor should be new banking facilities and to make available land for the Merchants National Bank and Terre Haute First National Bank not only for banking but for shops," Logan stated.

Other objectives include recommendations from the architecture

commission on what buildings and blocks should be kept; moving of, or renovations for the Sheldon Swope Art Gallery, called "one of our greatest assets" by Logan; uniform store hours downtown; further development of the entrances to Indiana State University on Sixth and Third streets; agreement on the future of the Terre Haute House; new plans for downtown housing on the second and third stories of some of the buildings and new housing for moderate and intermediate income groups; some use for the old freight sheds on Wabash Avenue into a farmers' market, pub and good restaurant facilities, and a clean-up program to reduce "fugitive dust" from the streets, a part of the pollution problem.

Logan also said there should be a river front park because the Wabash River is "world famous." He added, "We feel there should be a mix" downtown and noted his group did not suggest a downtown mall. Downtown areas are "turning around," he declared, and the "only way we can go is up."

Logan introduced Paul Pfister, local realtor, who said he was "pleased" with the meeting and commented traffic "belongs on Cherry and Ohio and we hope we can solve the traffic problems first."

Robert Kinsman, director of the Swope Gallery, commented the "his-

torical approach must be comprehensive and diverse and anything done must be done with quality and good taste." He asked for preservation of what was good, what has "quality and good taste," and cautioned "whatever we do must be socially and esthetically valid."

Wines emphasized the historical legacy of Terre Haute, and said there are fragments of a "flamboyant past" and a "legacy of vitality" in the city. He stated he was making a case "for the imagination" in discussing a theme for downtown revitalization and called the tax structure "enormously important." People will gravitate to where there is diversity of services and activities, he pointed out.

Logan and Dr. Richard Landini, president of Indiana State University, emphasized the diversity of Terre Haute's heritage and its cultural, educational and historical legacies. Landini commented on the need to provide for the great work force of people and their needs in the downtown area which in turn would make Terre Haute a center for the Wabash Valley area.

Landini also said he did not want to "create a dilemma" in pushing for the closing of Sixth Street but he hoped the group (Terre Haute Civic Improvement) would be attentive to the data relative to this proposal.

Logan said the First Congregational Church is interested in establishing a park west of the church near

Sixth and Ohio streets. When asked for further comment, Mrs. Eva Hopp, chairman of the church board, said last year the church had expressed an interest in acquiring some land to the west.

"Now," she continued, "we're not ready to make a decision at this point. There are many things to be looked into before a decision would be reached. But we are still interested."

Kirby Smith, executive director of the Terre Haute Housing Authority, said it is anticipated two years will be needed to complete the renovation project in the 10-block area around central downtown for which a \$1 million Urban Action Development

'Temporary'

Vigo County Public Library

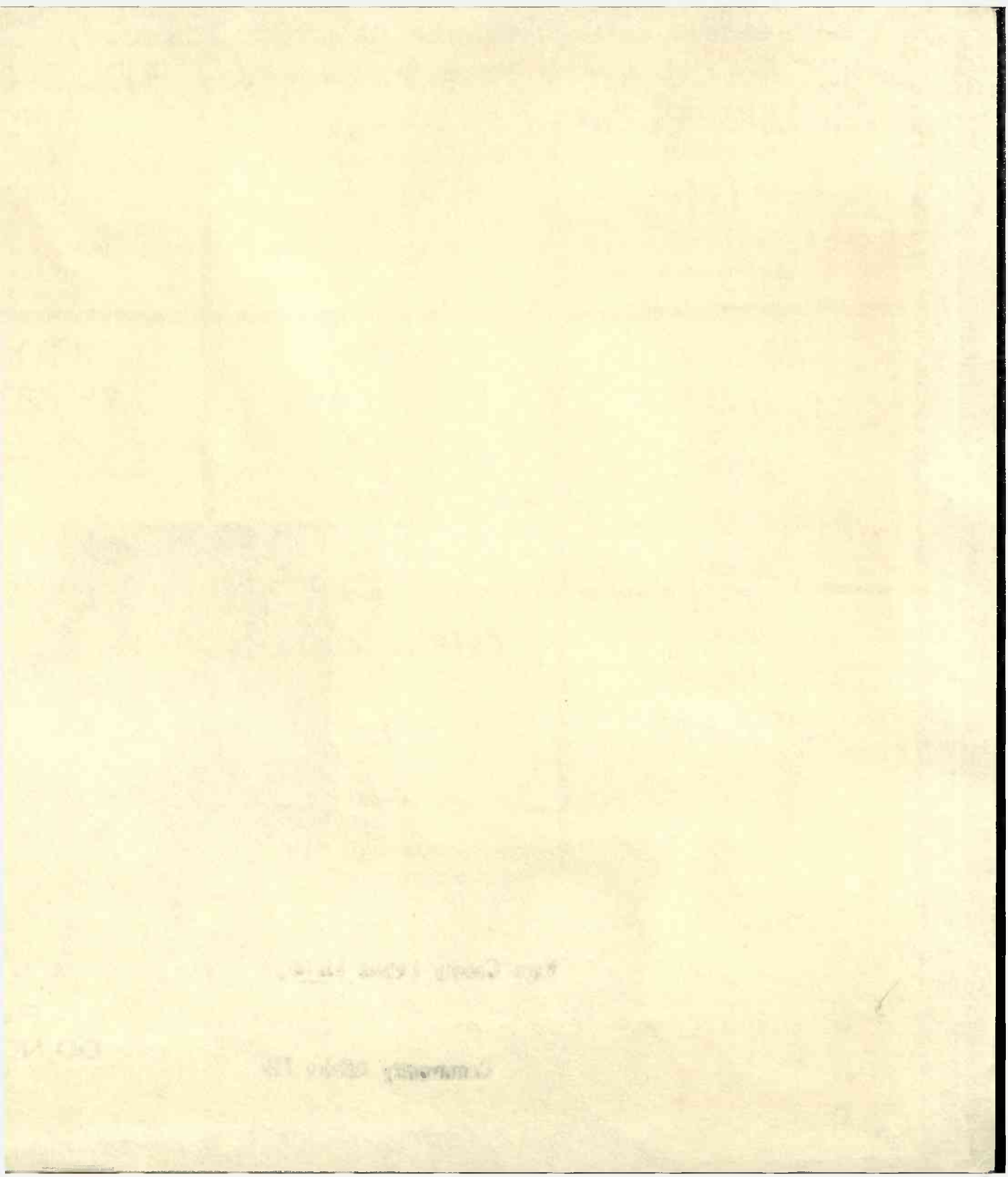
Community Affairs File

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Grant has been awarded. It will be matched by \$9 million in private funds.

There will be public hearings later this spring on what the public would suggest for development on Wabash Avenue between Sixth and Seventh streets and also on other proposals in revised plans of Civic Improvement, according to Smith.

Professor Pickett said his commission's work is to provide the community with ideas to be considered, act as a catalyst and then provide continuity for what the city has decided it wants. One of its first jobs will be to inventory physical, cultural and social resources.



Waiting on warmer weather

T APR 20 1979

Downtown intersection work planned

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff Writer

Work on improving the intersection of Sixth Street and Wabash Avenue is to begin this spring when the weather becomes warmer, according to Jim Burdick, city engineer.

The intersection was redone last year under the title of Sixth Street Demonstration Project. After being closed for a time, the site was remodeled and the transformed intersection reopened in November of 1978.

The street was redone with bricks, an asphalt covering, ramps for the handicapped, benches and trees.

However since the opening cere-

mony, asphalt in the circle of the intersection and on approaches to the site has eroded causing a rough surface for motorists.

Also, puddles form in some spots of the intersection and not all bricks laid at the site settled at the same level. Burdick said.

Other situations which need attention at the intersection are warped lids on some of the wood trash receptacles, bringing up the topsoil in some planters and replacement of four trees which have been hit by cars, according to Burdick.

Until the permanent work gets under way at the site, the city is planning to lay some temporary

asphalt in the approaches to the intersection, Burdick said.

For any asphalt work to be effective on a permanent basis, the temperature must be about 75 degrees or above, the engineer explained.

Contractors the city signed to do the original work will be responsible for the work this spring, Burdick said.

Progressive Construction and Engineering Co. Inc. was the head contractor with whom the city had a contract on the project, Burdick said. That contract amounted to about \$300,000, he said.

The landscaping contract went to Doug Wearrens Nurseries, Louisville.

Burdick said. That contract totalled about \$37,000.

The city has retained 10 percent of the total payment to each firm; so the work this spring will not be any extra cost to the city, the engineer said.

A spokesman for Progressive told the TRIBUNE that the asphalt was laid at the intersection on a temporary basis in the cold November weather.

A permanent cover cannot be laid in cold weather so the asphalt was put down last fall to hold until this spring when a permanent fix could be laid, the spokesman said.

The trees are to be replaced at the expense of the people who hit them.

Vigo County Public Library

Community Affairs File

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Officials, department heads see county office building plans

JUL 13 1979

City Planning, T.H.

By CAROLYN TOOPS
Tribune Staff Writer

Vigo County officials and department heads had their first look at plans for a new county office building Thursday, as architects for the project presented proposed space allocations.

The new office building is part of a government complex to be built with proceeds from a \$4.95 million general obligation bond issue. Also included are a new jail and nominal remodeling of the Courthouse.

Fleck & Hickey Inc. of LaPorte, are architects for the project. Bids are scheduled to be opened July 31 for the bonds. Fleck estimates the project can be put out for bids in August or September, barring unforeseen circumstances.

Plans call for a two-story security facility to replace the old Vigo County

jail. The county's computer operation will be housed in the basement of this building.

The adjacent county office building will have two stories, but no basement.

Overall plans for the government complex call for the Courthouse to be used mainly for courts and court-related functions. Some remodeling of the existing facilities is anticipated with proceeds from the bond issue.

John Fleck and Herman Terzino of Fleck & Hickey were busy all day Thursday going over their designs with county officials. More discussions were planned for Friday.

Earlier, Fleck had asked officials and department heads to list their space requirements.

Tentative plans for the new office building show several offices, including those for area planning, county

auditor and commissioners. Also included are a lobby and a large meeting room for the County Council's and commissioners' sessions.

Presently the County Council lacks its own meeting room. Fleck's plan provides for at least 30 seating spaces for the public, as well as for council members and other officials.

The architects propose locating offices of the recorder, treasurer, surveyor and Health Department on the second floor. County Commissioner John A. Scott suggested that the county assessor's office be located on the ground floor.

Plans for a new jail have been "in the works" for the past two years. The need for additional office space for county agencies and departments also was taken into consideration in planning for a government complex in the Courthouse-City Hall area.

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Community Affairs File

Vigo County Public Library

City Planning (T.H.)
Editor, Terre Haute Tribune-Star
Dear Editor

June 9, 1979

JUN 17 1979

Realizing that a number of organizations are at work on plans affecting Downtown Terre Haute any suggestions run the risk of being out of date even as they are made. But acknowledging this risk I should like to offer several suggestions:

SUGGESTION NO. 1: OPENING WEST WABASH AVENUE

The Terre Haute Downtown business area has been noticeably affected with the closing of traffic to Wabash Avenue from the West by the elimination of direct access to Wabash Avenue across the Wabash River Bridge. This is the route which formerly brought Illinois people directly into Downtown Terre Haute from Marshall, Dennison, Martinsville, Casey, Greenup and their adjacent farm areas.

True, the curving bypass from the Wabash River Bridge to Ohio Street brings the Illinois traffic to the parking areas along Ohio Street. We need these parking areas. But the bypass and the Ohio Street parking areas are not a substitute for direct access by car to Wabash Avenue. All the Wabash Avenue business establishments — and there are still 40 to 50 of them between 3rd Street and 9th Street — with their windows and doors facing directly upon Wabash Avenue. Unless an Illinois visitor knows specifically which place of business he wants to visit on Wabash Avenue he has to make a guess which parking lot on Ohio he should use. In addition, some of the Ohio Street parking lots are owned by adjacent businesses which hold the lots for their own customers only.

A new opportunity has recently developed by which all the previous changes in Downtown Terre Haute could still be considered as a plus, while at the same time the River Bridge opening into Wabash Avenue might dovetail with the present new plans for this part of town:

On March 30, 1979 the TERRE HAUTE TRIBUNE carried a front page article that the Vigo County Council in response to the Fleck & Hickey professional development plan "passed an ordinance approving a \$4.95 Million bond issue for the proposed new county jail, new county offices, and the remodeling of the Vigo County Courthouse... the new jail and county office building are to be located on a 2.95 acre site just north of the courthouse... a security tunnel will connect to the courthouse."

It would seem highly unlikely that the new county office building and jail would be constructed closer to the present County Courthouse than the width of a street of the dimension of Wabash Avenue. It is precisely in this strip between the present County Courthouse and the two new buildings North of it that the proposed street extension could directly link the River Bridge with Wabash Avenue.

The benefit of the proposal made in this letter is that this street extension from the Bridge directly into Wabash Avenue would encourage traffic from Illinois into Wabash Avenue's visual presence without materially altering the Fleck & Hickey development plan already approved by the county commissioners and the jail advisory committee. The cost of this short road section should be moderate, for conceivably it might be worked into the present Fleck & Hickey plan without any major change in that plan.

Not all the traffic from Illinois comes into Terre Haute on Interstate 70 and the Downtown should do everything possible to provide a direct visual invitation to nearby communities West of the city.

SUGGESTION NO. 2: A LEFT TURN INTO WABASH AVENUE FROM 3RD STREET.

Automobile traffic pouring into 3rd Street (U.S. 41) from the North should be permitted to make a left turn into Wabash Avenue. This is now prohibited. A bystander any time of day can witness how heavy is the traffic from the North headed South on 3rd Street as it passes by Wabash Avenue.

This traffic includes many of the communities Northwest of Terre Haute in Illinois such as Paris, Chrisman, Ridge Farm, Kansas, and Charleston, but also substantial areas of Indiana North and Northeast of Terre Haute — Clinton, Rockville, Montezuma, Crawfordsville, Greencastle. In addition much of this traffic comes from the Northern sections of Terre Haute itself and its suburbs, perhaps chiefly by way of Lafayette Avenue.

Yet when this traffic reaches Wabash Avenue at 3rd Street no left turn is permitted. This spot is the visual and natural entrance to the Downtown. But any car wishing to come there must proceed a block further South beyond Wabash Avenue to Ohio Street before turning left and pick its way to a suitable parking lot — meanwhile with its driver having been tempted to keep going on 3rd Street to a shopping center where he knows parking is unlimited in space and free of charge.

Some time ago I received permission to quote Mr. Garland Cooper, who had Smith's Hardware and Appliance Store, the first location at the West end of Wabash Avenue. When traffic was routed from the River Bridge to Ohio Street behind his place of business and when traffic from the North coming South on 3rd Street was blocked from a left turn which would take it in front of his store he suffered an immediate and continuing loss of 20% to 25 % in retail volume.

SUGGESTION NO. 3: NOT CLOSING CHESTNUT STREET

An article on page one of the TERRE HAUTE TRIBUNE for April 3, 1979 tells of a study by Indiana State University to consider the feasibility of closing 6th and Chestnut and 7th and Chestnut. Well, I am as proud of Indiana State as any citizen and I want its campus to be beautiful. But as for these street closings, I gently urge: please re-consider. People use these streets. With 4th and 5th streets one-way, as well as 8th and 9th one-way, the main two-way streets are 6th and 7th and they cross Chestnut of course. Sixth and 7th streets can take cars the entire North-South length of the city directly into the heart of the Downtown. They constitute the borders of the only DOUBLE block on Wabash Avenue Downtown because 6½ street does not cut across Wabash Avenue. Thus Sixth and Seventh are not one block apart, but two blocks. Were they to be closed at Chestnut, with the city's traffic on the North side of town the pedestrian walking spread on Wabash Avenue would be widened from the present two blocks between Sixth and Seventh to 3 blocks, and even 4 blocks, depending where the pedestrian was headed after leaving his car in the vicinity of the one-way streets.

Now, take a look at your East-West streets above Wabash Avenue. The first is Cherry, but it's one-way West only. Then come Mulberry and Eagle. They're already closed. So then we come to Chestnut, the street under consideration to be closed. It goes straight through, East-West, from the river to 20th street. Chestnut is the only street on the North side of the city which gives such a wide traverse of the city East-West and is two-way and reasonably close to the Downtown. To find another which serves an equally wide East-West function it is necessary to move northward seven blocks above Chestnut, to Locust. Thus we can see that Chestnut bears an almost unique East-West traffic function for the Near-North portion of the city.

Respectfully,

ARTHUR JUSTIN, President
Silverstein Brothers, Inc.
Terre Haute, Indiana

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Vigo County Public Library

Community Affairs File

Downtown forecast for the 1980s: Mostly optimism, a little pessimism

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff Writer

Will the wrecking ball continue to reign in downtown Terre Haute during the 1980s or will investors begin to develop many of the already vacant sites?

The past decade saw plenty of demolition in the downtown area, but some observers feel the decay in that area has "bottomed out" and the downtown will grow into a community center during the 1980s.

One reason for possible growth given by John Logan, executive director of Terre Haute Civic Improvement, is the increasing concern for energy efficiency. Civic Improvement is a group working for revitalization of the downtown core.

"We can't afford the urban sprawl in housing," Logan said. As we progress into the 1980s, people will begin living more in the city to make use of existing utilities instead of "leapfrogging" such services out into the country, he added.

Mayor Pete Chalos said more people will want to live closer to their work in the 1980s and some property now exists for development.

Sid Levin, a downtown merchant who has been involved in various downtown projects, said that as gasoline becomes more scarce in the next decade, more people will begin living in the city area to save money.

To house an increase in downtown population, Logan looks for increased apartment construction. Those structures probably will be high-rises, he added.

Downtown Terre Haute has had plenty of problems during the 1970s. Will those problems continue in the '80s? Tribune Staff Writer Bryan Taylor looks at the downtown issue in this special report. The TRIBUNE explores the future of downtown as part of its special series of reports, "New Decade: Terre Haute and The '80s."

More people already are living in the downtown area thanks to the Deming Center, a housing complex for elderly and handicapped persons at Sixth and Cherry streets. Another such center is being planned under a renovation proposal for the Terre Haute House.

Those two projects involve renovation of existing landmarks, but some structures have fallen subject to a wrecking ball during the past few years.

Although the downtown has looked as if an earthquake has struck it from time to time, some observers indicated the remaining property is good for development.

Chalos said he foresees investments being made by local businessmen and by out of town interests during the '80s.

"I think it will be banking and office buildings," Chalos said of the development he predicted. Some small shopping malls also could pop up in the downtown area



during the next decade, he added.

Logan said he looks for a mix of retail shopping stores and professional offices for persons such as doctors, dentists, insurance representatives, accountants and realtors.

Levin said the downtown will see a resurgence of its retail importance, but it will come in specialty shops instead of giant retail establishments.

Some evidence of a possible trend in smaller shops was seen last year with the opening of a pants store, a furniture store and a record shop in the downtown area.

A less optimistic view of the downtown was offered by B.K. "Pete" Barton, director of the Center for Urban-Regional Studies at Indiana State University.

Barton said he does not see much change in downtown during the next few years unless a new focus on its operation is reached.

Whatever development does oc-

cur in the downtown will be slow, Barton said. A constant influx of people is needed to keep the downtown going, he added.

Any development will have to be geared toward local demands because the area already has plenty of regional retail centers, Barton said. The downtown also could use more accessibility, he added.

Although Barton's outlook for the downtown may not be rosy, he said he "would be tickled to death" if the area could flourish.

If the downtown does flourish, parking will need attention.

Levin said surface parking should see an improvement in the 1980s and ramp parking also could be considered.

In addition to developing parking, a move needs to be made to increase access to the downtown area, Logan said.

Another possibility for the 1980s, according to Logan, is construction of a motor hotel near Hulman Center.

Logan also expressed hope for a major park to be developed in the downtown area.

Why is downtown important to the community?

Logan said, "Whether you like it or not, it still represents Terre Haute to most people."

When industry considers locating in a community, it looks for a good central business district, Levin said.

No matter what happens in the next decade, the downtown area figures to be a major newsmaker. Whether it will be news of growth or of continued decay remains to be seen.

T MAR 4 1980

Community Affairs File

Bank contemplates development in downtown

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff Writer

Terre Haute First National Bank is contemplating some type of development on vacant downtown property, according to TRIBUNE sources.

Almost a whole block bounded by Wabash Avenue on the north, Sixth Street on the west, Ohio Street on the south and an alley on the east will be vacant upon complete demolition of the former Root Store. The only buildings to be left standing include the First Congregational Church and the Spectator offices.

Within that block, First National Bank owns the property that once housed the Poise N' Ivy store on the southeast corner of Sixth Street and

Wabash Avenue. On Monday the bank took an option to purchase all the other vacant property — except a parcel which once housed the Libson Shop, a bank spokesman reported. The bank is negotiating an option on that land also, the source said.

Sources indicate the bank is contemplating a development from its current property to Sixth Street. The bank has a branch and parking space just east of the vacant property.

The bank has been interviewing developers to help study the area and what it could best be used for, the spokesman said. No schematics have been finalized for any development.

"It just takes time and study," the spokesman said of progress on that

downtown property.

A formal statement from the bank concerning development of the vacant property is being planned for later this month.

Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc., a downtown improvement group, has reported in the past that development of the vacant block has been one of its goals.

Physical changes continue to take place in the downtown area. Wrecking crews still were demolishing the former YWCA building on North Seventh Street this morning. Indiana State University has control of that land.

Wigo County Public Library

Community Affairs File

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Mayor Hints Local Bank To Announce Plans For Downtown Construction Project

City Planning (T.H.) -
S MAR 19 1980

By J. BLAINE AKERS
Star Staff Writer

Mayor Pete Chalos said a "middle ground" must be established between historic preservationists and economic realists interested in developing the city's downtown business district.

The mayor made the statement during his monthly "Tuesday with the Press" session at City Hall. Chalos said he wants the downtown area revitalized and hinted Terre Haute First National Bank may announce plans for development soon.

"What we need is a middle ground between historic preservationists and economic realists. There are some people who think just because a building is old it should be preserved. I

think there are buildings of historic value, but to save every old building is not my opinion of urban development," charged Chalos.

The mayor said committees, planning offices and private investors are continuing their study of the downtown area, but there has been no actual building commitment on the part interested parties.

Chalos said President Carter's proposal to cut 33 federal programs could effect the city's efforts in equipping buses with wheelchair lifts. Recently, the federal government mandated municipalities to install lifts on at least one half its bus fleet by 1982.

"If there is a major cut in mass transit funding, then it will be quite difficult to answer this mandate. The

city doesn't have the money to buy buses by itself and we must rely on federal assistance for new buses or any major changes to existing buses," said Chalos.

Tuesday, Chalos said the city is expected to spend about \$400,000 for street repairs this spring and summer and said community development block grant funds are to be used in certain areas where streets need resurfaced. The community development money only can be used in areas meeting federal guidelines set out in the grant application.

According to Chalos, the city is to announce its plan for fixing chuckholes and repairing local streets during a 1:30 p.m. Thursday press conference.

Meetings between city officials and representatives of local railroad companies are to be conducted, Chalos said. He said railroad crossings need repaired and some rail lines already abandoned need torn out.

Chalos said the city's two-hour parking limitation downtown would go into effect by the end of the month. He said two meter maids would be used to monitor the parking situation. License plate numbers of the vehicles would be copied and if the vehicle was parked for more than two hours it would be ticketed, Chalos said.

The mayor said a director of the Terre Haute Department of Re-development would be named within the week. The commission selection committee narrowed the field to three candidates last week, he said.

Community Affairs File

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Vigo County Public Library

City Planning - T.H.

Department of Redevelopment (T.H.)

T MAR 25 1980

New Redevelopment director selected

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff Writer

Terre Haute has "a lot of potential" for improvement at various sites, according to the city's new Department of Redevelopment director, R. Marc Elliott.

Elliott, a planning consultant for a Kentucky engineering firm, was hired to head the Department of Redevelopment at a special Redevelopment Commission meeting Monday.

Mayor Pete Chalos, who helped in selection of the new director, said Elliott has a wide background with "strengths that span the area of projects we'd like to get the Department of Redevelopment into."

Since January, the department has been without a chief administrative officer. At that time, the commission terminated the position of "executive director," a job then held by Robert Payne.

The new head's appointment is effective April 21 at a salary of \$25,000 a year, according to Chalos. No commitment on the size of the department's staff has been made yet, the mayor reported.

Elliott, 31, currently is working for G. Reynolds Watkins Consulting Engineers Inc., Lexington, Ky., in community planning and management. Among the firm's business is providing consultation service to cities.

Speaking from Kentucky during a telephone interview with the TRIBUNE, Elliott said Terre Haute seems to have a lot of potential for improvement. He said he has noticed many older neighborhoods in a transition period along with the downtown area.

When asked what the department would be doing that it has not in the past, Elliott said his first couple of months on the job would be spent studying the community and seeing what has been done.

"After that, I'm sure there will be some things done differently, but until I'm there I can't say exactly what they will be," Elliott said.

In the immediate future, current department projects will be continued, including administration of the city's Community Development Block Grant program, the new director said.

When asked why he wanted to come to Terre Haute, Elliott said he wanted to practice his skill in one city where he lived instead of traveling from city to city as he currently does in his consulting work.

Chalos reported his top priorities for the Department of Redevelopment will be the best possible utilization of the block grant funds, involvement in housing rehabilitation and work in anything to aid industrial

development.

In addition to his current work, Elliott has worked as a planner for the Bluegrass Area Development District, Lexington, Ky.; Louisville & Jefferson County Planning Commission, Louisville, Ky.; and for the Richmond Department of City Planning. He also has served as deputy director of the Jefferson County Community Development Office, Louisville, Ky.

Education for Elliott includes a bachelor of science degree in regional and urban planning from Ball State University and a master of public administration degree from Ball State University.

Projects in which Elliott has been involved cover the following areas: community planning, neighborhood redevelopment, writing of zoning ordinances, land development studies, environmental assessments and writing of grant applications.

Elliott was one of 38 persons who had applied for the local job, according to Cliff Lambert, a member of the Redevelopment Commission. Commissioners present for Monday's hiring of Elliott were Lambert, Winton Jones and Elizabeth Reifsnyder. However, the whole commission was involved in the screening process that resulted in Elliott's employment.

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The Roots of The Root Store

Business (T.H.) - Stores

An 1896 newspaper article exulted in the grand opening of the "Great Dry Goods Palace," complete with corset department.

Sp APR 1980

"Tonight at half past seven o'clock the doors at the new L. B. Root & Co. building will swing open and admit a public which has been impatient for some time to see the grandeur within."

For today's downtown customers who gaze at the rubble of the Root store, it may seem strange to read that enthusiastic appraisal of the "dry goods palace" from an 1896 newspaper article. But then it seems equally strange in days of 18¼% interest rates that \$50,000 or so could pay for the erection of a six-story structure within six months. Terre Haute First National Bank officials contemplate spending millions to build on the site of the 82-year-old structure demolished in February.

John Newlin of Newlin-Johnson Co. Inc. noted the building had become "functionally obsolete," built in an era when customers rode street cars to the downtown district and delivery men loaded goods in horse-drawn wagons. The land is probably worth more without the Root store building, he added.

Although the structure may have met an ignoble end, return with us to the time when it was the tallest and finest building in town. Imagine picking up the Nov. 12, 1896 edition of the Terre Haute Evening Gazette to read the front-page story on the grand opening event complete with a "cut" (etching). Take part in the auspicious occasion when a small river town still had unlimited promise.

Without television, radio or movies for diversion, small wonder folks in 1896 regarded the store opening as a big event. They indulged in window shopping among the numerous departments.

Store managers subdivided the floor area into an interesting array of departments, including silk goods, black dress goods, gent's furnishings, gloves, embroidery and lace, ribbons, dress trimmings, dress findings, notions (sic) and perfumes, ladies and children hosiery, muslin underwear, linens, flannels, cloak and suits, curtains, and, of course, the corset department.

"There is nothing gaudy or flashy in the store," according to the Evening Gazette dispatch. "It will not look cheap or dingy in a few weeks, as so many stores do."

"In the L. B. Root & Co. building the city of Terre Haute becomes the possessor of the finest dry goods palace in the state." The store also exhibited the "most elaborately fashioned building front in the city."

Announcement of the project came on April 9, 1896, about the time one of the partners, Max Hober, retired. The local Floyd and Stone architectural firm designed the structure. Once John A. Schumacher Co. of Indianapolis submitted a low bid of \$42,835, groundbreaking proceeded in early May. Charles Tyler, a local contractor, performed the excavation.

Each of the six stories were of somewhat unusual height, thus the building inched past (almost literally) other structures for the honor of tallest building. The Root store stood 90 feet from the sidewalk to the top cornice and measured nearly 65 feet wide by 142 feet long.

Since steel was not refined to the strength of modern-day alloys, the contractor reinforced the steel skeleton with heavy wooden timbers. He sandwiched the steel in between two timbers to form girders. Thus fire could not bend the steel. Huge stone piers in the basement supported the foundation. The article mentioned the store was built with safety in mind -- not government safety guidelines, but the self-policing rules of the insurance underwriter.

The contractor shipped in Lake Superior Sandstone, the same stone used for window caps in the old Terre Haute House, for the first two stories. Brick and terra cotta were used for the

remaining floors. Display windows were plate glass set in copper frames. Inside, rugged counters in the dry goods section were carved from quartered oak. The building was also equipped with heating and "ample" toilet facilities. Although electric lights were installed, they merely supplemented window light and light from a mammoth, 25- by 30-foot skylight. An odd note: power for the elevator came from the water works.

The man who wrought this marvelous structure was Lewis B. Root, a Hartford, Conn., native who first came to Terre Haute in 1857 to manage a dry goods store at Sixth and Main in the "National House block." At the time only one other store stood on the block. A saloon faced the original store location. Soon thereafter the store moved to Fourth and Main corner. Root became a partner in the fledgling operation. After brief interludes in Fort Wayne, he returned to Terre Haute. He bought out several partners until his name alone remained immortalized on the logo set in tile on the side of the building. Although the store carried Root's name, the 1896 article listed Mrs. S. S. Wheeler as the owner and Root as the leasee.

In the 1890s, the Root store building led a construction boom in downtown. Ironically, the demolition of the structure may now lead to a second construction boom and a downtown renaissance.

The Spectator gratefully acknowledges the assistance of researchers in the Special Collections department of Vigo County Public Library for the preparation of this article.



Photo by Martin from 1914.

At dusk, persons sift through the rubble of the Root's store for bricks in the shadow of the Sycamore Building (background).

Photo by Carl Orth



But the razing of the Root's store heralds a possible new boom in downtown, just as construction of the building in 1896 heralded the original construction boom of the area (see the accompanying article). The Spectator will analyze the fate of downtown in a two-part series. The first report will deal with events which led to the present plight and turning point for downtown. The second

installment in the May issue will examine in greater detail tax assessments of the sector and the historical significance of the architecture of many downtown buildings. We will also have something to say about the future of downtown in an editorial summarizing the potential for revitalization. We will spare you predictions, however, since so many predictions by so many people have fallen through in the past.

A Chamber of Commerce official said desire is not lacking for downtown development. The desire has always been there. But belief, conviction have been missing.

Do you believe?

(Continued on page 7)

Bank complex

Speculation mounts about the intentions of Terre Haute First National Bank to develop the property on Wabash between 6th Street and 6½ Street. Don Smith, bank president, affirms the bank owns or has entered into options on all the property in the half block (except the First Congregational Church and The Spectator offices), a major feat in itself since eight firms or persons owned the land.

Otherwise, bank officials closely guard their comments. Smith said no architect has been hired yet. An announcement may come later than April 1.

Skyrocketing interest rates are being closely studied, Smith added. They are causing concern, a concern shared by local developer Bob Pfister. Pfister is taking part in negotiations to sign firms for commercial space in the recently refurbished Deming Center. The outlook is "pretty flat," Pfister says. "Not only is money getting expensive; it is getting scarce." The Pub restaurant in Evansville is resubmitting to a local bank for financing of a new branch in Deming Center to reflect higher interest rates. The situation has scared off other potential investors for the moment. The Pfister firm also has not found a lease for the abandoned Osco drug store, empty since January.

Investors can turn to other supplemental sources of funds: Economic Development Administration and federal Urban Development Action Grants. A property tax abatement program is also available.

Up to \$5 million can be authorized by the Economic Development Commission, according to Woodrow Creason, EDC president. EDC support usually means the applicant can obtain bonds at an interest rate one to three percent lower than the prime rate. The applicant must write a letter to EDC including site area, cost per square foot, net worth, employment projection and other detailed criteria. EDC, of which Don Smith is a member, has received no such application concerning a downtown development project, Creason said.

Mayor Pete Chalos also favors reserving EDC support to entice industry. He figures Terre Haute already is a large merchandising center for its size.

Some \$150,000 in UDAG money is earmarked for commercial loans out of \$1 million grant announced in July, 1979, according to Kirby Smith, executive director of Terre Haute Housing Authority which processes the UDAG grants. With matching private capital from local banks, more than \$800,000 (out of \$5.5 million) is available for renovation of commercial businesses. (The city has applied for an additional \$1 million in a second UDAG grant.)

Four people have taken advantage of UDAG monies: optometrists Dr. D. W. Connors and Dr. Connors Jr. for remodeling offices at 318 S. 5th St., the former Ernestine School of Dance building; Jerry Lewis at 1308 Wabash; Venture One

development at 1322 S. 11th; and Terre Haute Concrete Supply Corp. at 1000 Chestnut. In addition, Smith oversaw the handling of 30 residential UDAG applicants. Commercial loans total \$53,000 while residential loans amount to \$69,000. UDAG monies can also pay for renovation of Deming Center commercial space.

For a major downtown development, a separate UDAG grant could fund a major portion of a project. Kirby Smith says an application could be processed within 90 days once a firm commitment from investors is shown. No such commitment has been demonstrated.

Banks in other Indiana cities such as Evansville have utilized UDAG funds for new construction, according to Dr. John Logan, executive director of Terre Haute Civic Improvement. Mayor Chalos noted that federal UDAG grants are competition grants, not entitlement monies. Terre Haute must compete for funds.

Some downtown tenants perceive UDAG regulations as inequitable. Monies are available only to the owner of the building. Since downtown has a high proportion of absentee landlords, some renters face more difficulties in getting a share of the UDAG pie.

Nonetheless, Mayor Chalos recommends a more positive outlook among downtown businessmen and the community. He calls for less defeatism. At the same time he squarely rests the burden of downtown development on the shoulders of private investors. In effect, the mayor says they must take the initiative. "You can't leave everything up to the city."

Once the commitment is shown, the city can help with a number of incentives. A tax abatement program decreases property taxes for new or rehabilitated buildings so that the owner pays roughly one year's worth of taxes in five years. Under Public Law No. 69, the city cancels all property tax the first year after construction and then taxes them on a gradually inclining scale which rises to 50% taxation in the fifth and final year. For example, a new building assessed at \$200,000 (assessments are one-third true cash value) would incur taxes of \$31,438 over five years instead of \$142,900. In other words, the building owner saves \$111,462 in taxes. By the sixth year the owner begins to pay the full \$28,580.

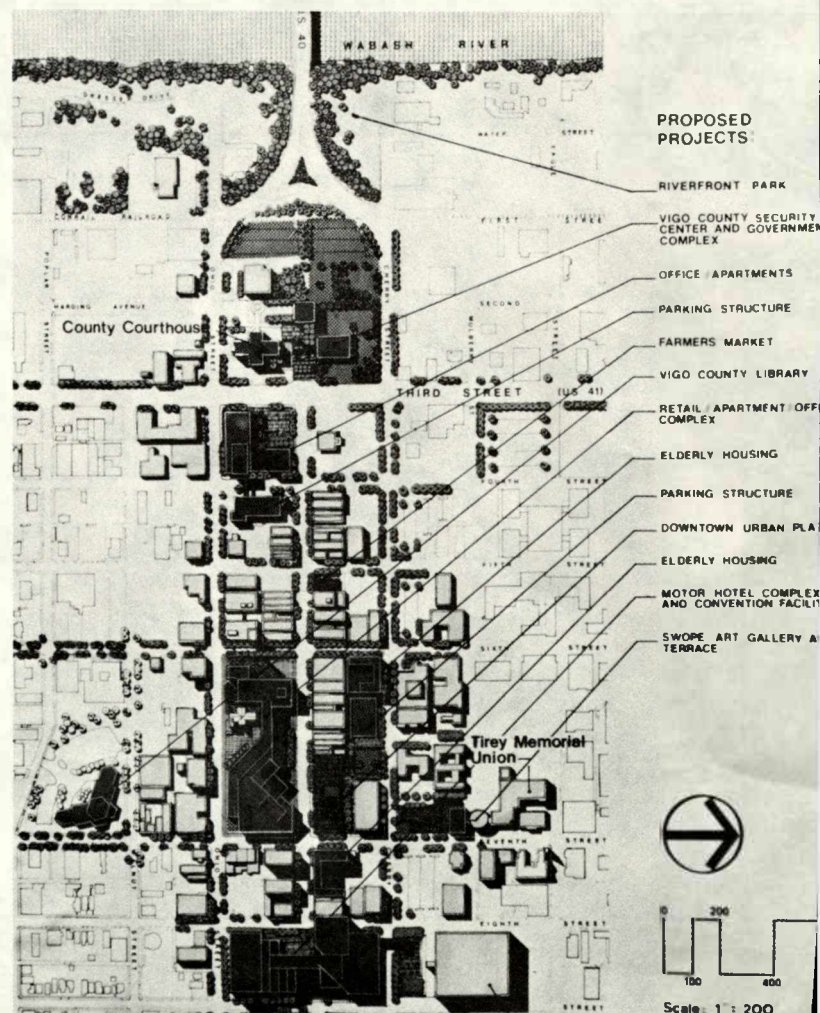
Historical perspective

The only incentive for building in the 1890s was to make money. As Terre Haute expanded with unlimited promise, new construction proliferated during a 20-year period around the turn of the century. The demolished Root's store, for instance, was raised in 1896 (see the accompanying article).

On Wabash itself, very little construction occurred after that turn of the century boom. Not until fire swept through a half block at Sixth and Wabash in 1963 was enough room cleared for new construction. Urban renewal and area planning had just been introduced at the start of the decade despite fears and firm opposition (stemming in part from newspaper articles such as a 1962

(Continued on next page)

Landplus West architects several years ago prepared this overview of downtown development. Some projects came to pass -- the Vigo County Public Library and elderly housing. Other proposals, such as the riverfront park and a new Swope Art Gallery terrace, still languish on the drawing board.



Indianapolis Star piece which said urban renewal here could displace up to 23,000 residents). After the March 20, 1963 debacle which claimed the Deming building, Haag's drug store, Hillman's jewelers and Wolf Clothing Store located downtown in new structures.

In 1964, the late Mayor Ralph Tucker proposed a 100-acre, \$8 million, civic center complex between First and Third Streets to join together city hall, the courthouse and a new federal post office building in the 200 block of Wabash Avenue. The plans died.

Several years later a parking lot appeared on the northwest corner of Seventh and Wabash when the building housing Hook's drug store since 1958 was demolished. Library researchers place the date around 1966 to 1967. Hooks would move their operation to 523 Wabash (the present First National Bank offices) until they closed the branch in the mid-70s.

In the late 60s, Montgomery Ward and Sears, two major downtown retailers, forsook the immediate downtown vicinity for brand new buildings. Montgomery Ward moved to 333 S. Third St. while Sears was the first major store to locate in Honey Creek Square.

Complexion of downtown continued to change toward small, specialty shops when newly-elected Mayor William Brighton appointed Lucien Meis Jr. president of a blue-ribbon committee to advise him on downtown revitalization. The Committee for Preservation of Downtown Terre Haute in March, 1972, endorsed the concept of the 'Y' interchange at the Wabash River bridge to deflect overflow Wabash Avenue traffic onto Ohio and Cherry streets. Root's store officials already had begun dropping hints that they might abandon downtown. Talk of a downtown mall, originally proposed in 1959, still remained on the drawing board.

After the last graduating class in 1971, Wiley High School was razed.

Terre Haute lost another genuine landmark. Despite limited protest in August, 1972, the Rose Dispensary building on the northwest corner of Seventh and Cherry fell under the wrecking ball. ISU established a "temporary" parking lot at the site.

Residents laughed at the "big yellow barn", but the Hulman Civic University Center at Eighth and Cherry rapidly became a big attraction for downtown shortly after its December, 1973, grand opening. The final plans had been pared down from a far more ambitious two-block superstructure.

The flow of downtown refugees continued. The bus arcade in the 800 block of Wabash Avenue stood empty when the station moved to smaller, more modest quarters at Second and Cherry. The Hulman estate still owns the interesting structure and has resisted offers from developers who would tear it down.

Another major fire on March 3, 1975 destroyed buildings on the northeast corner of Fifth and Wabash. The Erwin building, another alumnus from the turn of the century construction boom, was gutted. Tindall's appliances, Chairs Galore and Indiana Business College sustained sizeable losses beyond the \$500,000 real estate loss. The latter two relocated in downtown. Tindall's closed its Terre Haute branch. In 1976, Joseph Mattox of Mattox & Wood Funeral Home purchased the site to develop a shopping plaza. In the meantime, he resurfaced the area and converted it to a parking lot.

In recent years, Wabash Federal Savings and Loan (its title then) built a modern structure on the former Corner Furniture Store lot at Third and Wabash. Across the street, the Smith Hardware Store was condemned but remained vacant for several years up to the present.

In April, 1979, Vigo County Public Library celebrated the grand opening of its new building at Seventh and Walnut. ISU took control of the old main branch in the 200 block on North Seventh Street built in early 1900s through the Fairbanks. At the new site, the Wiley High School cupola stands in the yard.

Sixth Street Beautification

The road to beautification is paved with good intentions. The Sixth Street Demonstration Project, opened on Nov. 22, 1978, represented to many downtown businessmen the futility of revitalization efforts. Eventually it might come to be seen as a complement to construction of new buildings and new residents of the Deming Complex may find the trees and benches a welcome sight in the concrete jungle this summer. But one downtown merchant derided the concrete islands as "drunk islands." Pundits snickered when a tree was stolen recently. Terre Haute Civic Improvement, which provided \$68,000 of the funds for the project, did not get its money's worth, according to executive director John Logan. Mayor Pete Chalos would only say matter of factly that "for a one-block project it was rather expensive." Cost overruns mounted well above bids. In 1980, Chalos requested an audit since the city is still receiving bills related to the project.

Like so many other proposals, the demonstration project went awry from original plans, according to Sid Levin, longtime downtown activist in Downtown Business Association. During an April, 1973, DBA meeting under Charles Lawson, businessmen advocated beautification along Wabash Avenue from Third to Ninth Street, or "spreading the joy around," as Logan put it recently. They estimated costs of \$337,018 for new sidewalks, curbs, landscaping, lighting and fees. The figure included \$28,805 for contingency funds. Arcades at Spectator Court and elsewhere were mentioned. Instead the scope was reduced to a one-block area of Sixth Street between Cherry and Wabash Avenue.

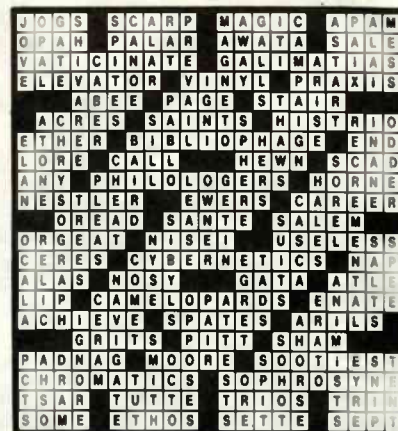
Vote in the May 6 Primary

JOHN A. SCOTT

Democrat for Commissioner

Paid Political Advertisement

ANSWER TO MERCHANTS SAVINGS ASSOCIATION PUZZLE PAGE 10



Local officials announced the project in September, 1977. Impatient with obtaining approval from the state highway commission for improvements on U.S. 40 (Wabash), those local officials went ahead with the Sixth Street alternative. On March 16, 1978, Progressive Construction won a bid of \$284,212 for construction funded mainly through Community Block Grant monies, a federal program. Warren Nurseries was awarded the landscaping contract for a base bid of \$36,445.45. Terre Haute Civic Improvement, in cooperation with Duane Sorenson of ISU, funneled money into the project.

Things soon went wrong. Workers under project coordinator Joseph Yuza unearthed six layers of pavement. Other delays slowed construction. Even after the project was completed the pavement in the circular design at the Sixth and Wabash intersection quickly deteriorated. For many months the very rough pavement deterred shoppers from driving downtown.

Mayor Chalos commented the "which comes first, the chicken or the egg" syndrome limits beautification projects. Merchants failed to fully appreciate beautification while buildings continued to deteriorate.

Recent developments

Two years of delays also marked demolition of the half-block which included the old Root's store building. Three owners held title to the property. In February, 1978, ISU Foundation assumed ownership for part of the building plus 609 and 607 Wabash. The tax exempt organization saved the former owners capital gains taxes. The property was worth \$100,000.

Not until September, 1979, did John Haley of Haley Brothers Construction Corp. buy the rights to adjoining buildings which housed the Root's beauty salon and Libson shop. After the unusual transaction, Haley could complete the job begun in November, 1978, when the interiors were gutted.

Once negotiations wrapped up, demolition proceeded in a few months. A common firewall necessitated wrecking all buildings at once, investors say. The contractor finished in the first few days of March, 1980, one year after the optimistic prediction for completion of demolition by Terre Haute Civic Improvement. On March 3 the ISU Foundation transferred its properties to the civic improvement group, according to foundation secretary-treasurer, J. Kenneth Moulton. Presumably THCI will hand over the keys to First National bank in the event of a major project. ISU Foundation presented a bill for \$72,500 for expenses incurred, principally interest on money.

Although speculation on the Root's property dominated news about downtown in 1979, another project was brought to fruition! The Deming Center. The housing authority converted the former hotel into 109 apartments for elderly tenants who occupied the project in December, 1979.

Yet rehabilitation of such old structures requires mammoth sums equivalent to

funds to erect a new building. Deming Center cost a total \$4.15 million, including fees for professionals and \$350,000 purchase price for the structure. CDI Inc., contractors for the project, broke down costs per square foot. Figures show the rehabilitation cost \$25.30 per square foot, or roughly \$24,595 for each of the 109 units. Federal monies paid for the project.

Besides the expense of such projects, land acquisition always entails lengthy negotiations. The housing authority wishes to turn the Terre Haute House into a twin apartment complex along with Deming. The Hulman estate, which owns the historic structure, held out for a higher purchase price of the building at Seventh and Wabash. Reportedly the Hulmans asked for roughly \$700,000, or double the cost of the Deming. The housing authority holds an option on the property after a feasibility study determined that the structure was not suitable for conversion to a modern hotel complex.

Also, higher interest rates are clouding the Terre Haute House project. Original cost estimates for the project were \$5.5 million. Skyrocketing interest rates can tack as much as an additional 10% onto projected costs, according to Kirby Smith, executive director of the housing authority. With the current climate bond underwriters are hesitant to finance anything until interest rates settle down. Also the housing authority must secure approval for any additional appropriations from HUD (Housing and Urban Development) funds.

Participatory leadership

Although narrow self-interests of industrialists and businessmen served the city for nearly 100 years, the old leadership techniques no longer function in an interdependent community. The era of wealthy entrepreneurs such as the Demings and Chauncey Rose are over, a recent report by Leadership Terre Haute concludes.

The old decision-making process led to negative perceptions among citizens, including covert manipulation, ineptness and corruption of city officials and elitism.

As the city ceased to grow in the 1930s, the self-serving leadership style of capitalists began running counter to the interests of the city.

Activism in the 60s and 70s, such as Housewives' Effort for Local Progress, further reduced the effectiveness of the personal leadership of an elite few.

"We call for enlightened self-interest," the report concludes. Developers and bankers must view investments in terms of long-term profit of a healthy community. Citizens must form political coalitions instead of warring factions. "We call for citizens to set aside their past grievances and seize this opportunity to build a dynamic Terre Haute Community in which all of us might enjoy economic and spiritual prosperity."

Nex issue: the concluding installment of The Spectator series on downtown examines in detail property tax assessments and a historical district proposal.

Deming Hotel in its heyday. From the styles of the cars the photo was taken in the late 30s or early 40s.

Photo by Martin



WOODRIDGE MOTEL

*A restful treat for your
out-of-town guests . . .*

4545 Wabash Ave.

877-1571

DOWNTOWN

Shopping for a new image

City Planning (T.H.)

By Carl Roger Orth

Sp APR 1980

*The lights are much brighter there
You can forget all your troubles
Forget all your cares and go--
DOWNTOWN*

The words to the 1965 pop tune glorified the era when downtown Terre Haute still reigned as uncontested retail trade king. The business district may have lost its crown, but the area is stirring from its coma with new signs of life and vitality. Reports of the closing of downtown may have been greatly exaggerated.

For the first time in nearly a quarter of a century, tenants, landlords and businessmen sense a real opportunity to halt downtown's debilitating destruction. It is still too early to talk of hope or faith. Cautious anticipation or guarded optimism would describe the attitude best. Mainly, they wait. Wait and see.

They wait because so many times in the past hopes have been raised and hopes have been smashed. A 1959 Chamber of Commerce report sounded the alarm for immediate action to avert an impending crisis or disaster. Since then local officials and private groups have found the "key to progress" at least a dozen times -- the west-end 'Y' interchange, beautification, a downtown

mall concept, a 1962 government office complex proposal, a downtown hotel complex -- but none of the keys unlocked the door to revitalization. It's the story of the little boy who cried wolf. The townspeople -- jaded and cynical merchants -- no longer automatically respond to cries for cooperation.

Even so, the downtown community is willing to talk of better times ahead. Deming Center was remodeled into apartments for the elderly. Parking meters will be removed shortly. Contractors are clearing away the rubble of the Root's store after numerous delays. A historic district would provide funds for restoration. Now Terre Haute First National Bank has put everybody on the edge of a seat for the announcement of a multi-million dollar development on the half block where Root's once stood.

Development by the bank could anchor the business district. In the past decade the area seemed like a ship without a rudder adrift at sea in a heavy fog near a rocky shoreline.

Razing the Root's structure removed a huge psychological stumbling block. The hulk of the building stood empty for nearly two years during negotiation snags for ownership of adjoining build-

ings. Quipsters have had a field day with downtown. Pundits have mercilessly derided downtown with jokes likening it to shell-shocked London of World War Two, an earthquake disaster area, or the location for filming the latest Hollywood disaster flick. The same folks kidded that major fires in 1963 and 1975 which wiped out nearly whole downtown blocks were part of the urban renewal program.

Everything seemed to mock the best efforts of merchants to reverse decline. A "We're Going Up" sign stands in front of the rubble of the Root's store. Despite store closings, a bus stop bench still proclaims "More of Everything" in downtown Terre Haute.

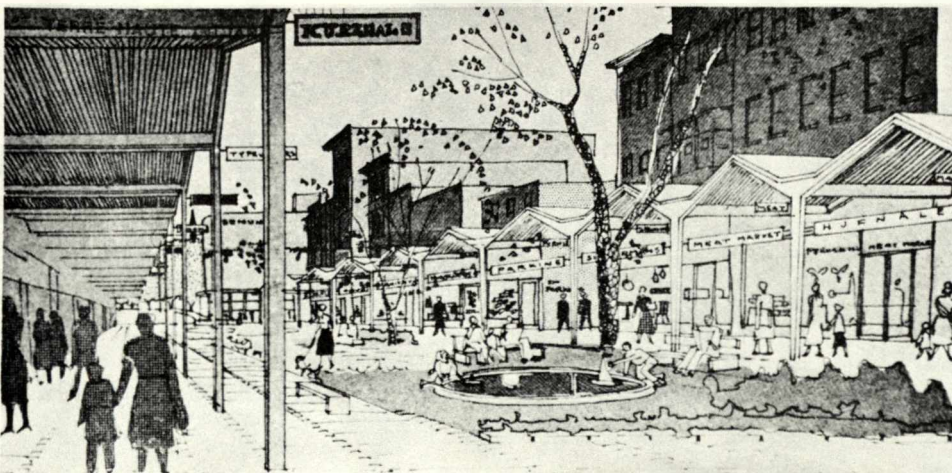
The snide jests grate the nerves of some downtown businessmen. They view constant bad-mouthing as one of their main problems. They want good publicity to go along with a change of attitude. They are shopping for a new image to complement new construction.

Passage of an ordinance to remove parking meters boosted morale. But big hurdles remain, not least among them the coordination of private groups, government and big business. Coordination in the recent past has been like a Laurel and Hardy routine when two men both bend over to pick up a hat and bump heads. Downtown has more of everything -- more problems, more proposals, more committees.

High interest rates could conceivably stall development. The unstabilized interest rate naturally causes concern among First National Bank officials. During a 10-day period alone from March 4 to March 14 the prime rate rose from 17¼% to 18¼%. Now it is 19%. Investors have the jitters. But an announcement from the bank could come before April 1.

On the horizon a band of downtown building owners could sue a second time for lower tax assessments on downtown property. A lawsuit several years ago succeeded in that aim until reassessment raised assessments again above values before the lawsuit.

A 1959 Chamber of Commerce report favored development of a downtown mall. By 1973, however, after experiments with malls in other cities, local downtown businessmen determined the idea is commercially infeasible.



S MAY 17 1980

City Receiving Complaints About Curb Work

By J. BLAINE AKERS
Star Staff Writer

A downtown beautification project has been everything but pretty for city officials who have received a lot of ugly complaints about the construction of curbs and sidewalks along Wabash Avenue.

The mayor's office has been besieged with telephone calls from angry business people and shoppers who contend the construction work in the downtown business district is below par. Chamber of Commerce President C. Ross Hedges said he has talked with a number of business people who want to meet with Indiana State Highway Commission officials to discuss the project.

According to Mayor Pete Chalos, the city's only involvement with the project is its inspection. He said the former city administration contracted with the state highway department to inspect the \$608,907 project.

"If I had anything to do with it, we would just have repaired the cracks in the sidewalks and curbs instead of

all this Fancy Dan stuff," said Chalos.

The beautification project contract was awarded June 19, 1979, to Morris Electric Co., South Bend. That company completed the traffic signalization portion of the project, but subcontracted the sidewalk and curb construction to J. A. Sears Co., Terre Haute.

City Engineer Louis Glascock said the biggest complaint his office has received concerns the quality of work being done by the Sears firm. Glascock said business people have been quick to point out a gaping crack in a sidewalk at the northwest corner of Seventh Street and Wabash Avenue as well as drainage problems at the southwest corner of Fifth Street and Wabash Avenue.

About the quality of work being done, Glascock candidly remarked, "It's not the best I've seen, but it's not the worst either."

One businesswoman attempted to halt the pouring of concrete at one street corner after she discovered no wire was being used to reinforce the concrete. Glascock said state

highway specifications do not call for the use of reinforcing wire and explained the cracked concrete at Seventh and Wabash Avenue was caused by the settling of the sidewalk around the planter box and not because of the lack of reinforcing wire.

Glascock said the state highway department must be satisfied with the quality of work done before it accepts the project. The city engineer said the project was to have been completed May 19, but he doubts the project is finished until the end of the month. The contractor is subject to a \$150 per day fine for each day it exceeds the May 19 completion date.

Before the project is accepted, Glascock said he will demand the curbing at the southwest corner of Fifth Street and Wabash Avenue be torn out and replaced.

"The concrete has no finish to it at all. It looks terrible," Glascock said.

He also mentioned the need to fill the crack in the sidewalk at Seventh Street and Wabash Avenue with epoxy, repair wheelchair ramps at

Third Street and Wabash Avenue and several other minor repairs.

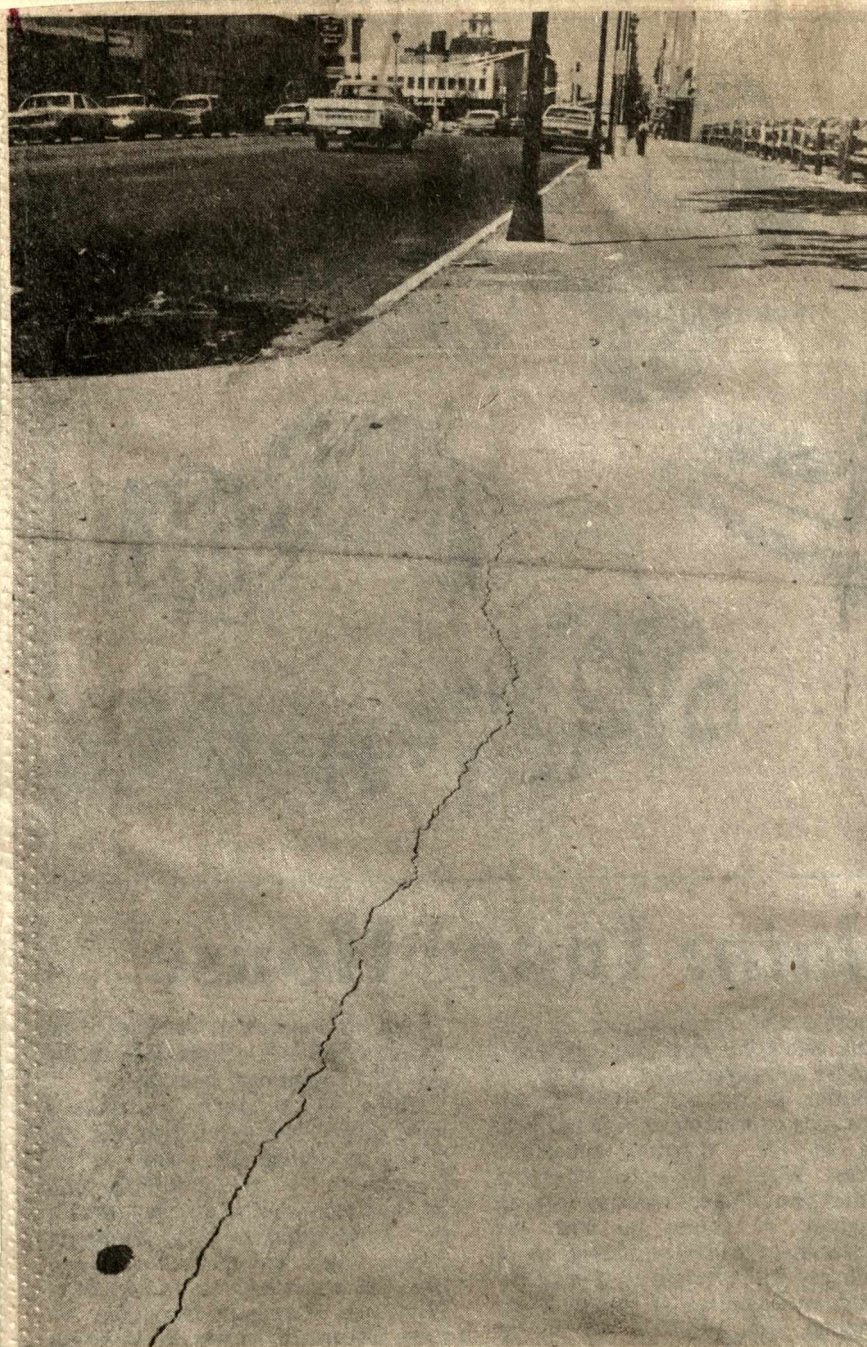
Glascock said problems are compounded when working in an urban area. He said business people are concerned with the potential loss of sales until the project is completed. One local store owner complained Mother's Day sales declined because construction work was going on at the time.

Project officials said to complicate matters there have been numerous problems with underground utilities. Glascock said antiquated utility lines were discovered underground and this slowed down excavating. He said problems with drainage also have occurred.

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Community Affairs File

Vigo County Public Library



SIDEWALK ALREADY CRACKED—Downtown business people are concerned with construction work going on along Wabash Avenue and said they question the quality of work being completed. This sidewalk at the northwest corner of Seventh Street and Wabash Avenue already has cracked, but city officials said the sidewalk will be repaired before the project is accepted by the Indiana State Highway Commission. J. A. Sears Co. is the subcontractor for the project.

(Staff Photo: Bill Williams)

MAY 21 1980

To The Editor Of The Star

C. H. Manning (T.H.)
I never bother you unless something makes me mad. A few years ago I wrote about the "Bird Sanctuary," the "Sewer Ripoff," and more recently I wrote about the "Panama Canal Give Away." This time I'm writing about the reprehensible condition of our downtown area.

This morning I read the article in the Star about those who are voicing their complaints, and I want to add mine which are sundry and different from the rest.

I wish the architect who dreamed

up this beautification plan could have made a trip to T.V.'s "Richardo's Fantasy Island" so he could have gotten the moonbeams out of his eyes before he started his work here!

Where is the beauty? Is it in the old fashioned, inlaid brick road, of which some of them are already chipped? Can we find it in the outdated, wooden hitching posts that are already cracked and weather beaten?

Is there any beauty connected with the manhole grates which are filled with debris of scattered papers, rags, empty pop cans, and old cigarette packages? I think not!

Aside from the issue of ~~conscientious~~

beauty, I want to direct your attention to the danger and hazard of rolling the sidewalks with its rounded curbs out into the street! Sacre bleu!

I ride the city bus with those high rise steps, and it is almost impossible to mount them unless the bus driver makes a clean curb stop. With these rounded curbs, the driver is forced to swerve the bus around a the curve which puts the bus on an angle with the rear-end taking up half the street while loading and unloading passengers. This is not only uncomfortable for the driver and the passengers, but it creates a dangerous and hazardous problem for oncoming traffic at the busy times of day especially at crowded intersections.

I feel as others do, that the downtown area did and still does need help. They could have mended the broken and cracked sidewalks, but they didn't need to add the prohibitive cost to the taxpayer by extending the sidewalks out into the street.

Beauty, they say, is in the eye of the beholder! As I walked in the downtown area yesterday, these eyes saw no beauty.

Sincerely,
LUCILE C. WEDDING
1612 Sixth Ave.

Civic Improvement Takes Option To Purchase City's Oldest House

Historic Houses (T.H.)
City Planning (T.H.)

5 MAY 24 1980

In an effort to preserve Preston House, the oldest house in the city at 13½ and Poplar streets, Terre Haute Civic Improvement has signed a 90-day option to purchase the property from its present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Richard A. Van Allen.

The announcement was made Friday morning by Dr. John A. Logan, executive director of Terre Haute Civic Improvement, who explained the option was signed with the objective of cooperating with a local charitable organization to rehabilitate the house and then sell it for commercial purposes. The charitable organization has not yet been designated but two are under consideration, Logan said.

Preston House, believed to have been built in the 1820s, was badly

damaged by fire last Nov. 18 and no attempt has been made thus far to rebuild it, Logan added.

"Civic Improvement is acting as an intermediary to try to help preserve this historic property," Dr. Logan said, "and is trying to work something out in the 90 days whereby a purchaser could be found for the rehabilitated structure, with the charitable organization to undertake the rehabilitation."

"The rehabilitated house could be

used for commercial purposes," he continued, "and this procedure seemed to Civic Improvement the only practical way to save the building. Civic Improvement itself does not plan to rehabilitate the building but simply is acting as intermediary."

The decision to attempt to save the building was made at a recent meeting of the Terre Haute Civic Improvement executive committee, according to the executive director.

City Planning (T.H.)
Downtown Comments

Several paragraphs were dropped from the end of the downtown article due to space limitations. The paragraphs quoted several people about downtown. We felt their comments were interesting enough to restore the missing paragraphs here:

1991
ROSS HEDGES, president of Chamber of Commerce: Nothing succeeds like success. The Chamber broadened the influence of the Downtown Business Association (now the revamped Downtown Business Council as part of the chamber) while working behind the scenes to represent the interests of merchants and businessmen. For instance, the chamber convinced city officials to remove construction barriers from Wabash Avenue temporarily during the Christmas rush season. "Decline has bottomed out." "These people are leaders; they ought to be treated like leaders."

JUDY CRITCHLOW, DBC president: "I have a big mouth, I think that's how I got the job." Sometimes it takes a big mouth to get things started. "The first thing I think they should do is eliminate about 20 committees."

"I'm sick of looking at the past. I don't want to look at 1930. Downtown, like everything, needs a little TLC--tender loving care."

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 **Vigo County Public Library**

Community Affairs File

planned

\$50 million downtown project

T AUG 21 1980

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff Writer

A proposed \$50 million project for development of the downtown was announced during a City Hall news conference Wednesday afternoon.

David Hocker & Associates, Owensboro, Ky., has agreed to develop properties in the downtown area working with local property owners and investors, Mayor Pete Chalos announced.

The city administration has entered into an agreement to help with

Although it is really too soon to tell, the plans for downtown have a positive aura about them; editorial, page 4.

the development through assistance with grants and bonds, Chalos said.

It is expected the project will be contingent on the city's ability to receive some federal Urban Development Action Grant money. That UDAG program incorporates the use of federal grant money accompanied by money from private interests.

Although no definite designs or locations have been announced, the project calls for a number of constructions.

Tentative plans call for a 400,000 square-foot retail shopping center with at least three department stores, two office towers supplying about 200,000 square feet of commercial space and the possibility of a 250-room convention hotel near Hulman Civic University Center.

In addition, possible construction of a central transit center for the downtown area is included.

Hocker said his firm will be in charge of the complete project development, including negotiations with prospective tenants for a commitment on taking space in one of the buildings.

Construction could start in 1981 and a 20-month construction phase is expected, Hocker said.

Charles H. Burton, director of the Hocker firm's urban development division, said the firm will manage the projects once they are complete.

Terre First National Bank and Lucien Meis of Meis Department Stores,

City Planning, T.H.
Community Affairs File

Proposed project at-a-glance

The proposed multi-million dollar project for downtown development tentatively includes:

- A retail shopping center with a minimum of three department stores and a total area of 400,000 square feet.
- Commercial space of 200,000 square feet in the form of two office towers.
- A 250-room hotel in the vicinity of the Hulman Civic University Center.
- Possible construction of a central transit center.

"will have a great interest" in the development project, Chalos said. He would not elaborate on that interest.

The bank does own a major piece of vacant property at Sixth Street and Wabash Avenue that has been considered a prime site for any future downtown development.

Donald E. Smith, president and chief executive officer of the Terre Haute First National Bank, said today he was "glad the bank can fit into the overall downtown development project."

"The bank," Smith said, "saw a need several months ago for a new

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Community Affairs File

Wigo County Public Library

facility. We were elated over yesterday's announcement."

Lucien Meis, president of Meis Department Store, said today his firm is not currently negotiating with anyone to build a new store downtown, as some reports have indicated.

However, Meis went on to say "that if all the factors come into place" he would possibly consider constructing a new store downtown. That determination could be, he added, more than a year from now.

City government's involvement in the project will be assistance with the UDAG program, economic development bonds, construction of parking facilities and assembling land for the project, according to Chalos and Marc Elliott, director of the Department of Redevelopment.

The city is to submit an application for a UDAG grant by October, Chalos said. Public hearings are set for 10 a.m. Sept. 6 and 10 a.m. Sept. 27 in the City Hall Courtroom.

The proposed development project is for all new construction, but it will help current downtown businesses

and properties, Elliott said.

The development project could give "downtown a reason for being," Elliott said.

A UDAG program to help current commercial ventures is in effect now, and the new project could provide a stronger incentive for current businesses to upgrade their facilities through the existing UDAG money, Elliott said.

Chalos said the city contacted three firms about development of the downtown area.

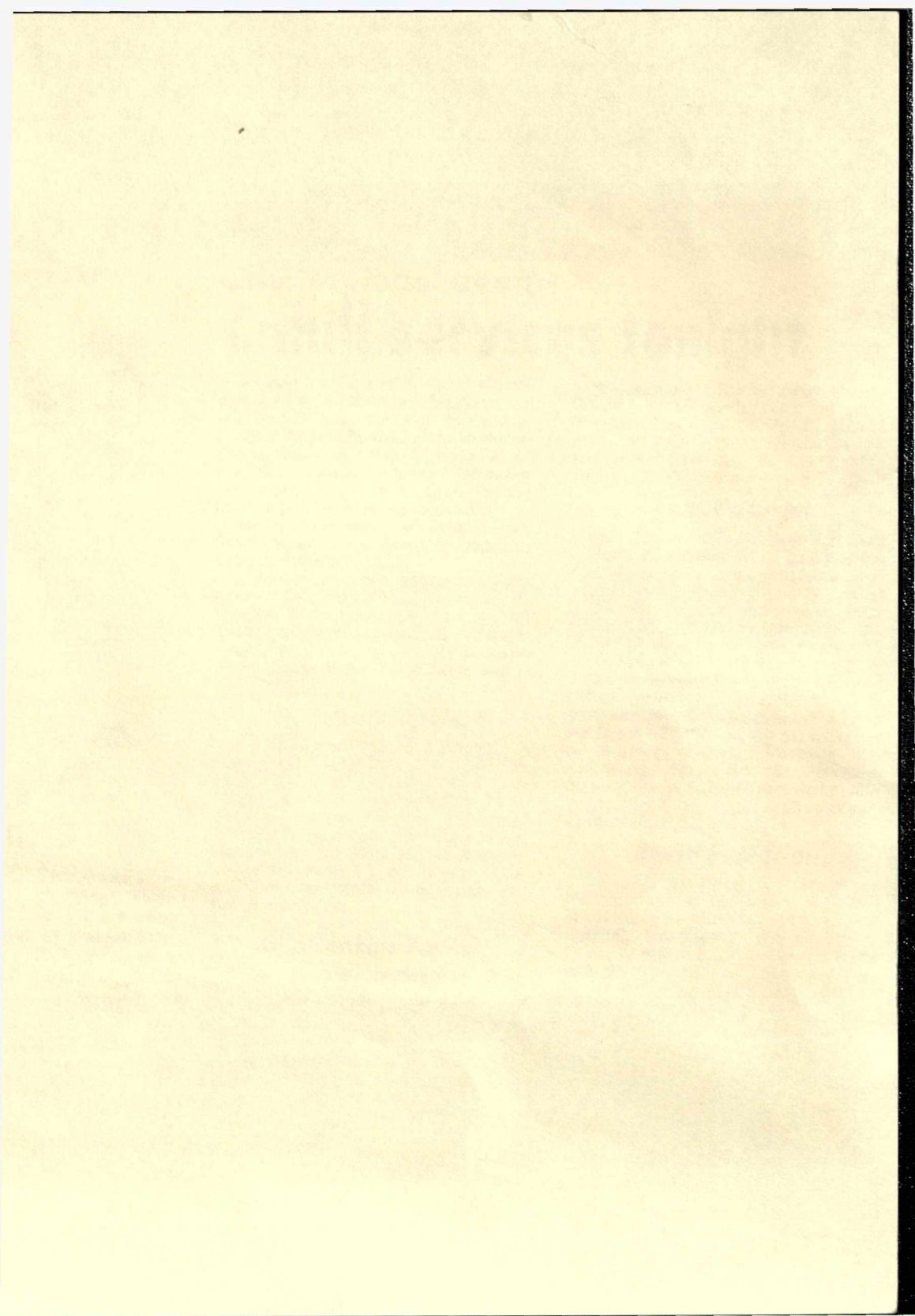
Persons who were willing to make an investment were contacted, the mayor said.

"We've had four years of talk and now it's time for action," Chalos said. The city "can't wait for another study," he stated.

A group called Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc. has been involved in studies of various aspects of the downtown.

A press package from the Hocker firm reports the firm has been involved in various mall projects

The firm reportedly has done some work with a Meis Store in Illinois.



Readers' Forum

T AUG 30 1980

Downtown plan viewed by readers

Editor's Note: This week's Readers' Forum question was: What is your opinion of proposals to construct a mall and other buildings downtown?

To the editor:

We were just discussing this topic last night with a group of friends and we agree it is (not a good idea).

Who would it benefit but the people already uptown?

Living in the south end of town, there are shopping centers south, east and west of us which are far closer.

Are they asking us to forget about the so-called "energy crisis" and drive all that way? No thanks!

Mr. and Mrs. H.E. Smith

To the editor:

Downtown needs something. Perhaps this is the needed shot in the arm that will save our downtown area.

Name withheld

To the editor:

The idea of a mall (stores, not trees and benches) and office complex sounds wonderful for Terre Haute, if (and the if is very big) only if it is financed by private finances.

Lee Hotsenpiller
Route 31

To the editor:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on the downtown issue.

It occurs to me that a positive approach is always more productive than a negative one.

Those of us who are anxious for a healthy downtown will endeavor to find every reason to be positive and support with our input to the downtown development being spearheaded by our mayor, Pete Chalos.

Ross Hedges
President
Terre Haute Area
Chamber of Commerce

To the editor:

I have worked in the downtown area for several years and would like to see more shops and restaurants return.

Sometimes it is difficult to find a place for lunch, and with the closing of numerous shops over the years, lunch hour shopping has been reduced considerably.

A secretary

Today's letters are in response to the Readers' Forum question posed in Monday's TRIBUNE. Each Monday a new question is asked in the Readers' Forum. Replies should be mailed to Readers' Forum, The TRIBUNE, 721 Wabash Ave., Terre Haute, IN 47808. All letters must carry a name, address and phone number of the sender. Names will be withheld on request, but all letters must be signed. Phone numbers will not be printed, but will be used for verification purposes if necessary. Letters should be received by The TRIBUNE no later than 3 p.m. Thursday for Saturday publication. Replies should be limited to 300 words and are subject to editing.

City Planning (T.H.)

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Vigo County Public Library

City Planning - T.H.

Proposed downtown project up for comment at hearing

Community Affairs File Community Affairs File

T SEP 4 1980

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff Writer

Local citizens will have a chance to express their views on a proposed downtown development project during a public hearing Saturday.

A hearing is to be conducted at 10 a.m. Saturday in the City Hall courtroom as part of the city's application procedure for a federal Urban Development Action Grant.

Developers working on the proposed \$50 million project will explain what is planned for the downtown, and local citizens will have a chance to ask questions, according to Marc Elliott, director of the Department of Redevelopment.

The city is planning to seek some UDAG money to assist with the development project and two public hearings are required before the city can submit its application to federal authorities. The second hearing is set for 10 a.m. Sept. 27.

Announced tentative plans for the project call for a retail shopping center with at least three department stores, two office towers supplying about 200,000 square feet of commercial office space and the possibility of a convention hotel. A private developer has expressed intentions to construct such a project.

The city's participation in the project is to include work toward securing federal funds, reports indicated.

UDAG is one of those sources and its money is being sought to assist with assembling a land package for the development, demolition of existing structures and site improvements such as utilities and sidewalks, Elliott said.

The exact amount the city will seek under UDAG is not known yet, but some estimates have placed the figure at about \$5 million or \$6 million.

Late October is the deadline the city has for applying for UDAG funds to assist with the development project, Elliott said.

Work on the application currently is under way

and by the Sept. 27 hearing a draft of the application will be ready for public review, Elliott said.

That draft is expected to include more details of the project, including a site for the development, Elliott said.

Developers have been sent a downtown map showing property parcels and their owners, according to Elliott.

The city has the power of eminent domain and may have to institute it to assemble a land package for the proposed development, according to Elliott.

In addition to assisting with property assembly, the city is to seek some federal funds from the Department of Transportation for parking garages to be built in conjunction with the project, Elliott reported.

Before any plans are finalized, the UDAG hearings will be conducted and persons will be given the opportunity to comment on how the project fits their needs and on any modifications they might want, Elliott said.

The public comments will be considered when the final draft of the UDAG application is being worked up, according to reports.

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Community Affairs File

Viigo County Public Library

City Planning (JFH)

City residents turn out for downtown hearing

T SEP 6 1980

By **PATRICK J. BARNES**
Tribune Staff Writer

An estimated 70 to 80 Terre Haute residents turned out today for the first of two public hearings on a proposed \$50 million downtown development project.

Addressing the residents were Marc Elliott, director of the Department of Redevelopment, and Charles Burton, director of urban development division of David Hocker & Associates, Owensboro, Ky., the firm which will manage the project once it is completed.

Today's public session was part of the city's application procedure for a federal Urban Development Action Grant. The second session, scheduled for Sept. 27 at City Hall, will allow the public to actually review the UDAG application grant.

James Ball, a local attorney, said the project "is long overdue. There have been too many studies about revitalizing downtown Terre Haute. It's time for action."

Another person to address the group, Dr. John Logan, president of Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc., said he wished to congratulate the "new team" in planning a development for downtown: "Development of the downtown is important. And I hope you are able to overcome the criticism."

Susan Brattain said that Terre Haute loses conferences "year after year" because there is no downtown hotel/motel. "All we ever do is talk about developing the downtown area while other communities do things," Mrs. Brattain said.

Burton explained the city has entered into an agreement to help with the development of the downtown area through assistance with grants and bonds.

The project is contingent on the city's ability to receive the UDAG grant which incorporates the use of federal monies accompanied by money from private interests.

The project, Burton said, is "complex and will affect a lot of people. Retail activity keeps downtowns alive."

The project, as explained by Burton, includes a medium size shopping mall with a minimum of three department stores, retail stores and possibly a cinema, covering an area of approximately 400,000 square feet; two office towers of 100,000 square feet each; a hotel consisting of not less than 250 rooms which would include a conference center; and possibly a central transit center.

As the project progresses, Burton said, there is a possibility that middle market high-rise housing would be developed.

Burton said that hopefully construction of the project could start in early 1981. "We hope to have portions of the project leased by January. We're encouraged by discussions with lenders," Burton said.

Burton told the group the project, as in any major construction program in a downtown area, will call for some demolition, but added before buildings are torn down, people should see what is going to take their places.

Vigo County Public Library

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Community Affairs File

70 Attend Hearing On Downtown

S SEP 8 1980

Nearly 70 area residents, most of whom were from Terre Haute, met with city officials and representatives of David Hocker and Associates Saturday morning to discuss the plans for major downtown development.

No new specifics came out of the public hearing conducted at city City Hall as views of local residents were heard and questions answered.

The Terre Haute Department of Redevelopment staff and Chuck Burton, director of urban development for Hocker & Associates, and an architect from the company listened to the input from those at the meeting.

According to Mark Blade, assistant director of the Department of Redevelopment, most people had a favorable attitude toward the development, saying it is long overdue as they would rather come downtown than go to other shopping centers.

An application for an Urban Development Action Grant must be turned in by Oct. 31. The city will not know if it will receive the grant until December or January.

Another public hearing is set for 10 a.m. Sept. 27 at City Hall.



EXPLAINING PRELIMINARY PLANS — Karen Alsure, a representative of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill Development Co., architect, explains part of the preliminary plans developed by the company for downtown

Terre Haute. Plans for development were discussed during a public hearing Saturday at City Hall. A second meeting is scheduled Sept. 27.

(Staff Photo: Malcolm Moore)

Vigo County Public Library

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Community Affairs File

Dept. of Redevelopment (T.H.)
City Planning (T.H.)
**Developer ready to buy
property options: Mayor**
T SEP 18 1980
Community Affairs File

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff Writer

The private firm involved in a downtown project is ready to start buying options on property that could be the site of development construction, according to Mayor Pete Chalos.

The mayor reviewed progress of a proposed downtown development project this morning during the Terre Haute Area Chamber of Commerce's "Third Thursday" program in a meeting room at Hulman Civic University Center.

No real estate for the proposed project has been acquired by David Hocker & Associates, the developing firm, Chalos said. However, the firm is ready to begin buying options on land, he reported.

Hocker & Associates is based in Owensboro, Ky., and it has secured financing for construction of some buildings in the downtown, according to Chalos said.

Exactly where those buildings will be located has not been determined, but two possible sites will be presented at a public hearing on Sept. 27, Chalos reported.

At 10 a.m. that day, the city will conduct a hearing in the City Hall courtroom on its application for an Urban Development Action Grant to be used in assisting the Hocker firm with downtown development. Various specifics of the project are expected to be outlined at that session.

Plans call for the overall project to result in construction of: a shopping mall containing various retail facilities, including three department stores; two office towers; a 250-room hotel; and possibly a central transit center.

City government's involvement in the project will be assistance with the UDAG program, economic development bonds and construction of parking facilities, according to reports.

Originally, the city had planned to



PETE CHALOS

Mayor Pete Chalos reports that the firm planning the multi-million dollar downtown project is now ready to begin purchasing options on property. Financing for construction of some buildings in the downtown area has been secured, although the specific sites for those buildings have not been announced.

use some UDAG money to assemble a land package for the project. But Chalos reported today that federal Department of Housing and Urban Development officials prefer that the city does not purchase the property. Federal officials said that if the development project does not go through, the city and the federal government would be stuck with the land, he explained.

Chalos and employees of the Department of Redevelopment met Wednesday with HUD officials in Indianapolis to discuss the city's application for UDAG money to be used in the project.

Although HUD does not want the city to buy any land, according to Chalos, the city may have to declare some sites blighted so they can be condemned and made available for development. Regulations govern what makes up a blighted area, he said.

During a question-and-answer session, Chalos reported the vacant Smith building at Third Street and Wabash Avenue could be torn down

prior to the upcoming winter. He said the property has been in the bankruptcy court.

On another downtown topic, Chalos stated some outside financial interests have expressed interest in constructing some apartments in the downtown area.

Chalos' talk this morning dealt mostly with downtown development, but he said the city administration is continuing work toward securing new industry in the city.

Development packages were offered to two firms to locate in Terre Haute, but they were turned down, the mayor reported. Those companies were Cummins Engines and an air transportation firm called the Flying Tigers, he said.

Chalos said it is his policy not to make any announcements concerning proposed industrial development unless something "concrete" has been decided.

Thursday's session was sponsored for the chamber by the Terre Haute Concrete Supply Corp.

City Planning (T.H.)

15

S SEP 10 1980



DEMOLITION UNDER WAY — Wrecking crews spent most of the day Tuesday demolishing the building at the corner of Ninth Street and Wabash Avenue. That building is one of several labeled for demolition to make way for what city officials will be new building construction.

(Staff Photo: Malcolm Moore)

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Community Affairs File

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City Planning (T.H.) Private Investors Are Lined Up: Chalos

SEP 19 1980

Mayor Pete Chalos in remarks Thursday morning about progress of downtown development said private funding sources are "lined up to build whatever is needed in downtown Terre Haute" and reported on his meeting Wednesday morning in Indianapolis with staff members of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Speaking before the more than 125 persons at the Terre Haute Area Chamber of Commerce's Third Thursday program at Hulman Civic University Center, the mayor explained the development firm of David Hocker & Associates, has the private fund sources lined up and a local realtor will be acquiring options on behalf of Hocker.

Chalos also said the multi-million dollar downtown project is ready to start to get the necessary tenant leases and to begin purchasing options on property once the decision is made as to sites.

Determination of sites are expected to come after a 10 a.m. public hearing Sept. 27 in City Hall courtroom on the city's application for an Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) which will be used in assisting the Hocker firm with downtown development. Two possible sites will be presented at the hearing.

The mayor said he was informed by HUD officials if the city can get the leases for floor space

for the proposed development, "Terre Haute will be in line for consideration." Chalos said "we feel these steps will be successful." HUD would prefer the city not purchase the property and, the mayor added, the city cannot get into debt.

He anticipated by the end of October the city will be able to make application for the grant. The application probably will be for Phase I which is for retail and office space and entails \$30 to \$35 million in private investment.

Chalos, in later comment, noted for the city to prepare its UDAG grant, it has to have a lease commitment from at least three businesses wanting to locate in the proposed development. He also expressed concern about the need for the city to acquire property where businesses may relocate temporarily during construction of the proposed development.

Chalos told the Thursday morning meeting every \$7,500 in investment creates one permanent job and the it is necessary to show the city will get back in increased taxes what the federal unit will put into a project.

In reply to questions from the floor, the mayor said the downtown district will extend from Third to Ninth streets and from Cherry to Ohio streets.

The city, he added, has authority to designate any area as blighted through the Redevelopment Department if it can be proven according to regulations.

The owners in the Terminal Arcade area, Chalos continued, are removing properties at their own expense. The former Smith Department Store at Third Street and Wabash Avenue, which has been in bankruptcy court, may be razed by this winter.

Chalos also said some outside financial sources have indicated some interest in building some apartments in the downtown area between Third and Fifth streets. Development packages were offered to Cummins Engines and the Flying Tigers air transportation firm for location in Terre Haute but the offers were not accepted. The city administration is continuing to work to secure new industry for the area, he added.

Chalos introduced Marc Elliott, executive director of the Terre Haute Redevelopment Department; his assistant, Mark Blade, and Mike Barnes, the economic development administrator. Redevelopment staff was represented at the HUD meeting Wednesday.

Plans at present include for the overall project a shopping mall for retail facilities, two office towers, a 250-room hotel and possibly a central transit center.

Community Affairs File

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Development location could be presented

Community Affairs File

T SEP 24 1980

City Planning, T.H.

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff Writer

A possible location for a proposed downtown development project is expected to be presented during a public hearing Saturday, according to Marc Elliott, director of the Department of Re-development.

The hearing is set for 10 a.m. Saturday in the City Hall courtroom. The hearing is on the city's application for an Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) to assist with the downtown development.

Representatives from the developing firm, David Hocker & Associates, Owensboro, Ky., are to be present to explain the project Saturday, Elliott said.

No site for the project has been announced, but the choice is to be narrowed to one or two by Saturday, Elliott said. Six sites reportedly have been considered.

The project reportedly contains three phases: a retail shopping mall accompanied by office buildings; residential housing units, probably apartments or condominiums; and a hotel with an emphasis on being a conference center. A central downtown transit center also is a possibility for the overall project.

Initial estimates placed the total project cost at about \$50 million.

To assist with the project, the city is seeking federal UDAG funds to help with land acquisition and with site improvements. The grant being sought for the retail shopping-office phase could total between \$3 million and \$4 million, Elliott stated.

Originally, the city had planned to submit a UDAG application in October, but now it is "going to shoot for a January application," Elliott said.

The extra time to ready the application is being taken so a stronger application can be forwarded to federal officials, Elliott explained.

Under the UDAG program, various cities compete for the grant money and strong commitments

are needed on a project before the federal government hands over the money, he said.

The project also has seen a shift in how the land would be acquired with the grant money. Originally, the city had planned to purchase necessary land for the project and lease it to Hocker.

Since that time, city officials have met with officials of the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. HUD asked the city to change its approach and loan the UDAG money to Hocker and so the developer would own the property, Elliott said. The money would be repaid to the city and the government would not have the risk of being stuck with some major property if the project does not carry through to completion, he said.

Last week, Mayor Pete Chalos reported Hocker has secured financing for the project and it was ready to being buying options on land for the project.

Elliott reported informal negotiations as to possible land purchases have been conducted, but no serious negotiations can take place until the city receives its UDAG money and properties have been appraised. That could come by spring of next year.

If the city does not receive UDAG approval, that does not mean the downtown project will be scuttled, Elliott said. He pointed out that UDAG has four application periods each year and the city could reapply.

Another consideration is tax increment financing where part of the developer's taxes on its property would go toward paying off bonds needed to finance the project, reports indicated.

No property tax money from the general public is to be used in the development, according to project officials.

The first phase of the project could be complete in 1983, according to reports.

Saturday's hearing is to be the second UDAG hearing for the project. The first one took place on Sept. 6 and it was attended by about 70 persons.

Community Affairs File

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Downtown complex site proposed

T SEP 27 1980

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff

Representatives of a private developing firm today presented the site where they want to locate a retail-office complex in the downtown area.

Two possible designs for proposed downtown development were presented at a public hearing attended by about 90 persons this morning in City Hall.

Both schemes for the proposed retail-office complex would fall in an area bounded by Seventh Street, Cherry Street, Sixth Street and Ohio Street, according to proposals presented this morning by representatives of David Hocker & Associates, Owensboro, Ky.

Under the design proposals being considered at this time, Wabash Avenue would be closed to vehicle traffic between Sixth and Seventh streets.

The proposal calls for the four-block area to contain an enclosed

City Planning, T.H.
shopping mall anchored by three department stores and two office towers of about eight to 10 stories high, according to Bill Scott, an architect with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, the firm doing the architectural work for the Hocker firm.

"These plans will change numerous times because there are so many factors and so many balls up in the air," said Charles H. Burton, director of the Hocker firm's urban development division.

If plans do continue as presented, it appears most buildings currently in the four-block area will have to be torn down. Burton said plans call for retaining the federal office building at Seventh and Cherry streets, the Deming Center at Sixth and Cherry Street, and the First Congregational Church at 630 Ohio St. The possibility of keeping the existing First National Bank Building also is being considered, he said.

No timetable for the project was presented today, but project officials

said comments received today would be considered as final plans are drawn up.

In addition to the department stores and the office towers, the proposed project would be accompanied by smaller retail outlets.

Also shown today were plans for some other possibilities that might occur in conjunction with the work.

Those possibilities included a convention hotel south of the Hulman Civic University Center between Ninth and Eighth streets from Wabash Avenue to Cherry Street. Also, a transit center at the east side of the retail-office complex at the current site of Seventh Street and Wabash Avenue, at least three parking facilities and the possibility of housing along Cherry Street and Wabash Avenue between Fifth and Third Streets.

After today's hearing, according to Burton, the plans will be refined and one will be settled upon. Then, he said, a model of the proposed con-

struction will be developed and a financing program will be designed.

As the project progresses, some of the property needed for the project may have to be secured through the city's power of eminent domain. That would involve use of urban renewal laws.

Although no property tax dollars are to be used in the development, the city is playing a role by seeking federal UDAG funds to help with land acquisition and with site improvements.

At the current time, it appears the city would be applying for the federal money and loan it to the Hocker firm for the property purchase, according to Marc Elliott, director of the Department of Redevelopment.

Originally the city had planned to buy the land itself and lease it to Hocker, but the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development wanted to reduce any risk of the city being stuck with the land.

Wigo County Public Library

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Community Affairs File

City Planning (T.H.)

Pieces May Fall In Place At UDAG Public Hearing

S SEP 26 1980

By J. BLAINE AKERS
Star Staff Writer

Problems perpetuating the economic decay of the city's downtown business district continue to puzzle local officials, but it seems a resolution to the predicament is near.

Downtown development project officials Saturday will unveil preliminary details, including tentative site selections for development in the central business district. Decisions at this point in the project, undoubtedly, both will be raved and ridiculed, yet, as Mayor Pete Chalos propounds, "At least we're finally moving in the right direction."

Direction is what has lacked in previous endeavors to rejuvenate the downtown area and Chalos believes the addition of David Hocker & Associates, developer for the \$50 million proposed project, is the difference this time around.

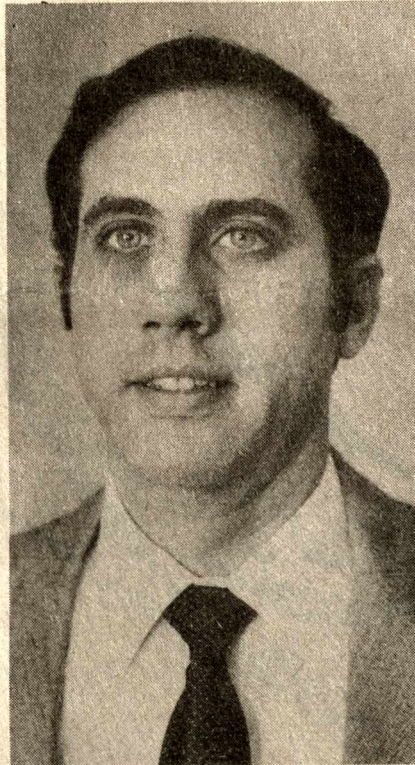
"We've had a lot of good ideas in the past, but never were previous administrations able to tie the pieces together. I am not about to knock the efforts of past administrations because their intentions were good. We'll just capitalize on the efforts of the past and take it a few steps farther, hopefully to reality," Chalos remarked.

He recently announced Hocker & Associates has secured financing for the project, but still city officials look for funding assistance through the Urban Development Action Grant program for additional development. The mayor said the UDAG grant application hinges on "commitment" of private investors willing to put large amounts of money into the current sagging economy.

According to Marc Elliott, city redevelopment director, Hocker & Associates has secured financing but must now lure tenants to lease space in the proposed shopping mall and office towers. Attracting tenants may not be an easy job.

"Some business people are skeptical. Some of them have good, established businesses and find it difficult to consider moving into a new shopping complex," said the mayor.

Yet, one proposal under consideration would require several established businesses to uproot permanently or at the



MARC ELLIOTT

least, temporarily. A second proposal being studied involves upgrading some existing businesses to coordinate with planned new construction.

New construction at this stage includes 400,000 square feet of retail area, 200,000 square feet of office space, a 250-room hotel and parking structures.

Many downtown business owners are vitally interested in plans for proposed development, but some of them are still unsure what is happening.

"We know what we read in the newspapers, but we really haven't learned much other than that from the people running the project," said Robert Kadel, owner of Kadel's Holiday Gift Shoppe.

"I'll go along with everyone else once we know what's going on, but right now we're in the cold," said Kadel.

The problem communications between business folks, project coordinators and

skepticism. As one business owner said, "You can't say you're for something if you don't know anything about it."

Elliott contends project officials have maintained an open door to all prospective and existing merchants. He said many of the questions on the minds of the merchants are on the minds of project officials, too.

"They (merchants) don't know because we don't know some things about the project. We are still making decisions and there still are a lot of unanswered questions in everyone's mind," said Elliott.

Hopefully, this Saturday some of the questions lurking in the minds of the interested, but doubtful will be answered. And, perhaps, once their doubts are dashed then maybe answers to a diminished downtown economy can be resolved.

Session Begins At 10 a.m.

A second public hearing concerning future development of downtown Terre Haute is scheduled for 10 a.m. Saturday at City Hall.

Representatives of Hocker and Associates, Owensboro, Ky., a company specializing in urban development, are expected to attend the hearing to discuss Terre Haute's application for an Urban Development Action Grant.

Total investment in downtown development could run to an estimated \$50 million. The proposal, as planned now, includes construction of two office towers, a retail shopping mall and a hotel.

Approximately 70 persons attended the first public hearing earlier in September. Most speakers at the first session endorsed the redevelopment proposal, indicating it is long overdue because citizens would rather shop downtown than travel to shopping areas outside the city.

An application for an Urban Development Action Grant must be turned in by Oct. 31. The city will not know if it will receive the grant until December of January.



Downtown Puzzle



(Staff Photo: Curt Willie)

T SEP 29 1980

Community Affairs File

Downtown development proposals presented during hearing Saturday

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff Writer

A variety of proposals for downtown development, including a retail-office complex covering four square blocks, were presented during a public hearing Saturday in City Hall.

A private developing firm, David Hocker & Associates, Owensboro, Ky., announced the site where it would like to locate a complex containing retail stores and two office towers.

Plans also were presented of de-

velopments that could result as a spinoff from the retail-office complex. They included some housing and a hotel.

The Hocker firm has announced it would like to locate the retail-office complex in an area bounded by Seventh Street, Cherry Street, Sixth Street and Ohio Street.

That complex would contain three department stores, two office towers and other retail stores. Most current structures in that four-block area will have to be torn down for the project to be constructed as planned. The

federal building, the Deming Center and the First Congregational Church at 630 Ohio St. are scheduled to remain, according to reports Saturday.

"That's what we think would be the optimum site for the development," said Charles Burton, director of the Hocker urban development division.

The site already has some vacant land — a lot at Sixth Street and Wabash Avenue and a parking lot at Seventh Street and Wabash Avenue — that could be good for phased construction, Burton pointed out.

Also, the plans currently being considered would not close any streets except for Wabash Avenue between Seventh and Sixth streets, Burton said.

Other points make the site a good one for the development, Burton said. But he added he could not discuss those points.

At this point in the development project, the Hocker firm only is committed to progressing with the retail-office complex and a parking facility south of the complex at Sixth and Ohio Street streets, Burton said.

However, other possible alternatives for downtown development have been included in preliminary plans.

"We're not suggesting all of this happen at the same time," Burton said. The other possibilities are opportunities that could evolve from the installation of the retail-office complex, he explained.

Marc Elliott, director of the city's Department of Redevelopment, has reported the overall project is scheduled to contain three phases: a retail shopping mall accompanied by office buildings; residential housing; and a hotel with an emphasis on being a conference center.

Reactions Mixed On Downtown Plans

S OCT 2 1980

By J. BLAINE AKERS, Star Staff Writer

Proposed plans for the Wabash Centre development project in the city's downtown business district have produced mixed reactions from local merchants and building owners.

Most businesses in an area bounded by Ohio and Cherry streets between Seventh and Eighth streets are expected to be affected by the revitalization scheme, according to project officials. Many of the businesses probably will be displaced as a result of new development.

Negotiations for land acquisition have begun locally between property owners and project developer, David Hocker & Associates. Project officials are hopeful property can be purchased without condemnation proceedings, however the city administration is preparing an urban renewal plan which would allow condemnation to occur if it becomes necessary.

It is generally agreed among most merchants something is needed to infuse new life in the sagging downtown economy, yet, business owners are greatly concerned about their future.

Not all businesses currently located downtown will be situated in the new shopping mall and it is inevitable many smaller shops will close their doors. Some of the small business owners contend they will not be able to afford to lease space in the new mall or afford to relocate outside the developmental area.

It is estimated rent in the new mall will be approximately \$13 per square foot on the average, however, leases also may be calculated on a percentage of profits basis, too.

One small business owner, however, is pleased with plans for Wabash Centre even though she doesn't know whether she'll be a part of the new development.

"I think it is terrific. It's growth for our community and will benefit everyone. It's long past due," said Mrs. Judy Critchlow, owner of White Rabbit Copy Center, 618 Wabash Ave.

Mrs. Critchlow, president of the downtown business council, said it is sad some businesses will be displaced, but she said overall benefits of the project are of greater meaning. She said she will attempt to relocate her store close to the downtown area because much of her business is with downtown offices and Indiana State University.

"If it were feasible to relocate in the new mall I would. We will stay close at hand, however," Mrs. Critchlow said.

Lucien Meis Jr., president of Meis Brothers Co., Inc., said he is enthused about the project, but emphasized there are many details still to be worked out.

"We are a company who favors revitalization of downtown Terre Haute. We are, however, just one piece of the whole and until other pieces are put together, then we cannot really say much," Meis remarked.

Meis said he is vitally concerned with all aspects of the proposal and mentioned parking, other major retail businesses, motels, relocation of specialty shops and office space as important ingredients to the total project.

He credits Mayor Pete Chalos for recent progress in revitalization efforts. Meis said Chalos has worked hard to bring together developers and private investors.

City officials, on the other hand, point to Meis as a positive influence on the downtown plan. Hocker & Associates developed a new Meis Store in Champaign, Ill., and luring the development firm to Terre Haute came largely through the help of Meis, city officials said.

Other merchants also voiced satisfaction with intended plans, although some were concerned with tentative sites selected for

development. Chuck Galloway, owner of Galloway Photo, 659 Wabash Ave., said he was "shocked" when site selections were announced last Saturday at a project public hearing.

"It was quite a shock to learn they intend to demolish this building," said Galloway who purchased the structure Monday.

Galloway said he thought development would occur on Wabash Avenue between U.S. 41 and Sixth Street. He said he felt some of the established businesses would be salvaged and incorporated in the overall development scheme.

"I'm not against what they're doing, but there is no way I can move my entire business into the new shopping mall," Galloway said. He added, "I'll have to relocate my support facilities somewhere else."

Galloway said his current location houses not only retail space, but also facilities for his photography lab and mail order service.

Galloway and Robert Kadel, owner of Kadel's Holiday Gift Shoppe, 675 Wabash Ave., expressed concern about temporary relocation of businesses during the construction phase of the project. One scheme under study would require most downtown stores to relocate during construction, while a second scheme involves phased construction.

Project officials said they are trying to acquire property for temporary location of businesses during construction. One site under consideration is the Indiana Theatre. Other possible sites include the lobby of the Terre Haute House and the former Simplex Shoe Repair Store.

"If the construction phase of the project takes too long, then there's a good chance a lot of businesses could go under," said Kadel.

"I think relocation is a very important part of the project which hasn't been addressed or discussed fully with merchants. I'm not against the project, but we need to plan for the future and I think we have some questions which need answered," added Kadel.

"I don't think we have any other alternative than to develop new retail space. I've seen a lot of businesses go down the drain in the past few years and we've got to do something to stop it. I just wish the development wouldn't force me to sell out," said Galloway.

Mrs. Ross Elliott, of Ross Elliott Jewelers, Inc., 622 Wabash Ave., said she favors the project.

"It's time we rebuilt downtown Terre Haute. I'm all for it," she said.

Mrs. Elliott said she felt project officials should establish better communications with merchants, particularly matters dealing with relocation and acquisition of property.

Other merchants interviewed suggested project officials announce a timetable for acquisition, demolition and construction phases.

Demolition expected on building

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff Writer

A contract for demolition of the former Smith Hardware building at Third Street and Wabash Avenue could be entered into next week, according to one of the persons involved in the disposition of the property.

Attorney James McDonald, court-appointed trustee for the property, said he expects a court order to be handed down this week from federal bankruptcy Judge Michael Kearns in connection with the property, which has been tied up in bankruptcy proceedings.

The court is expected to hand down an order authorizing McDonald to enter into a contract to have the building demolished and the property sold, according to McDonald.

Various parties involved with the property have agreed to the stipulations of such an order, McDonald reported.

Kearns said today he is awaiting a prepared entry from the involved parties outlining the disposition of the property. He said once he signs the entry, the building can be demolished. A hearing on the matter was conducted last week, the judge said.

A contract for demolition could be entered into around Oct. 15 if all proceeds according to plan, according to McDonald. After the empty building is demolished, the property can be put up for public sale, the attorney said.

Proceeds from the property's sale would go to pay back taxes and demolition costs, McDonald reported. Any money left after that would go to the Small Business Administration to pay a mortgage that organization has on the property, he added.

The cleared land will be sold at a public sale, hopefully prior to January, McDonald reported.

No definite buyer for the site has been determined, but some interest has been expressed in the location in connection with a proposed downtown development project, the attorney said.

Potential purchasers have indicated the property is a better buy if the building is cleared, reports indicated.

The three-story building has been vacant for more than a year and it has become the home of pigeons. Broken plate glass windows and a door standing ajar have left the structure wide open. The floors of the structure are cluttered in some areas with papers, boxes, plastic, wood, broken glass and light fixtures. The building's exterior blue paint is peeling off the bricks.

"I think it'll be a real assest to the total community," Mayor Pete Chalos said of the expected demolition. He said the city condemned the structure "a long time ago" and he termed it an "eyesore in Terre Haute."

Prior to the building entering bankruptcy proceedings, it was owned by Garland and Dorothy Cooper, according to reports.

(over)



DEMOLITION EXPECTED — An agreement has been reached on how to dispose of the former Smith Hardware building at Third Street and Wabash Avenue, according to reports. The property reportedly has been tied up in bankruptcy court during the past few months. The building has been empty for more than a year.

Staff Photo/Curt Willis

Community Affairs File

City Planning (37)
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Proposed downtown designs displayed

OCT 10 1980

Local residents interested in a proposed downtown development project can take a close look at two possible designs by visiting the mayor's office in City Hall.

Two drawings for the proposed project are hanging on a wall for public display in the mayor's office, which is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

The drawings show the potential layout of a retail-office complex and some accompanying parking facilities.

The site a private developing firm

has picked for the project is bounded by Seventh Street, Cherry Street, Sixth Street and Ohio Street.

The proposed mall complex has been named Wabash Centre by the developing firm, David Hocker & Associates, Owensboro, Ky.

No new major developments in the project have been reported, but the Hocker firm has selected a general contractor for the project. That firm has been identified as Turner Construction Co., N.Y., with offices in Cincinnati.

Community Affairs File

Vigo County Public Library

Vigo County Public Library

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Interest 'High' In Downtown Proposals

By J. BLAINE MAKERS
Star Staff Writer

Developers for the proposed Wabash Centre downtown revitalization project claim they have received a great deal of interest from prospective tenants, although actual commitments are not expected for some time.

Chuck Burton, of David Hocker & Associates, was in Terre Haute Thursday to exhibit a scale model of the planned \$50 million development project which encompasses an area between Sixth and Seventh streets from Ohio to Cherry streets. Burton is optimistic about the project and said he has been meeting with potential tenants who would add new vitality and retail strength to the city's downtown business district.

"There is tremendous interest, but it is an important business decision on their part and they must be convinced what we have planned is the kind of development they're looking for," said Burton.

Perhaps, Burton's biggest job ahead is securing commitments from "anchor tenants," the three large department-type stores which surround the proposed downtown shopping mall. Until commitments are received from the anchor tenants, Burton suggests it is of little significance to negotiate leases with smaller businesses which could locate inside the mall.

Burton has met with some owners of existing downtown businesses here, but said most of them are interested in knowing who the anchor tenants will be since a tradeoff between risks and rewards hinges on the ability to attract anchor tenants.

City officials, according to Marc Elliott, director of the department of

redevelopment, are preparing an urban renewal plan expected to be completed in April. An urban renewal plan specifies plans for acquisition or rehabilitation of certain parcels, building demolition, and land clearance. The plan provides the city

OCT 3 1 1980

administration with the power of eminent domain commonly used to resolve land assembly problems, particularly in blighted business areas.

The project calls for the construction of 400,000 square feet of new

retail area, two towers accounting for an additional 200,000 square feet of office space, an overhead walkway leading to landscaped parking structures as well as street scaping and links to the Deming Center, Hulman Center and Indiana State University.



A LOOK AT THE FUTURE — Chuck Burton, of David Hocker & Associates, developers of the proposed \$50 million downtown revitalization project, examines a scale model of Wabash Centre which was on display Thursday at City Hall. Burton is using the model as a visual device to explain the project to potential tenants.

He said efforts are under way to secure commitments from anchor tenants who would be situated in three major department stores. The project encompasses an area between Sixth and Seventh streets from Ohio to Cherry streets.

(Staff Photo: Bill Williams)

Downtown City Planning (T.H.) plan model T. OCT 3 1 1980 developed

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff Writer

Among the recent steps in the proposed downtown development has been the showing of a project model to prospective tenants, according to involved officials.

During the past week, representatives of David Hocker & Associates, Owensboro, Ky., have been in Terre Haute showing the "massing model" to business representatives who might want to locate in the retail-office complex.

Charles Burton, director of urban development for the Hocker firm, said the model is being used as part of his firm's marketing for the project. The Hocker firm is to develop the downtown project.

No commitments from prospective tenants have been received yet, Burton said Thursday.

Businesses that have inspected the model are looking at the project from a business decision point of view and from a community aspect that the project is the kind of thing that could revitalize downtown, Burton said.

The model being presented at this time is not final, Burton reported. A lot of the final detail on the project will be different, depending on what tenants want for their businesses, he explained.

After various negotiations are complete, the buildings could be different in size, shape and texture, Burton said.

The Hocker firm has been concentrating on prime tenants for the project, including "anchor" department stores, according to Burton.

The city administration is involved in the project through an agreement with the Hocker firm. The city Department of Redevelopment is to help secure federal grants to aid in the project.

At the present time, the Hocker firm is committed only to a retail-office complex to be located in a four-block-square area bounded by Seventh, Cherry, Sixth and Ohio streets. The Hocker firm reportedly would own the project and provide for its management.

That complex would include retail shopping outlets along with two office towers. Parking also is figured into that initial phase of the work.

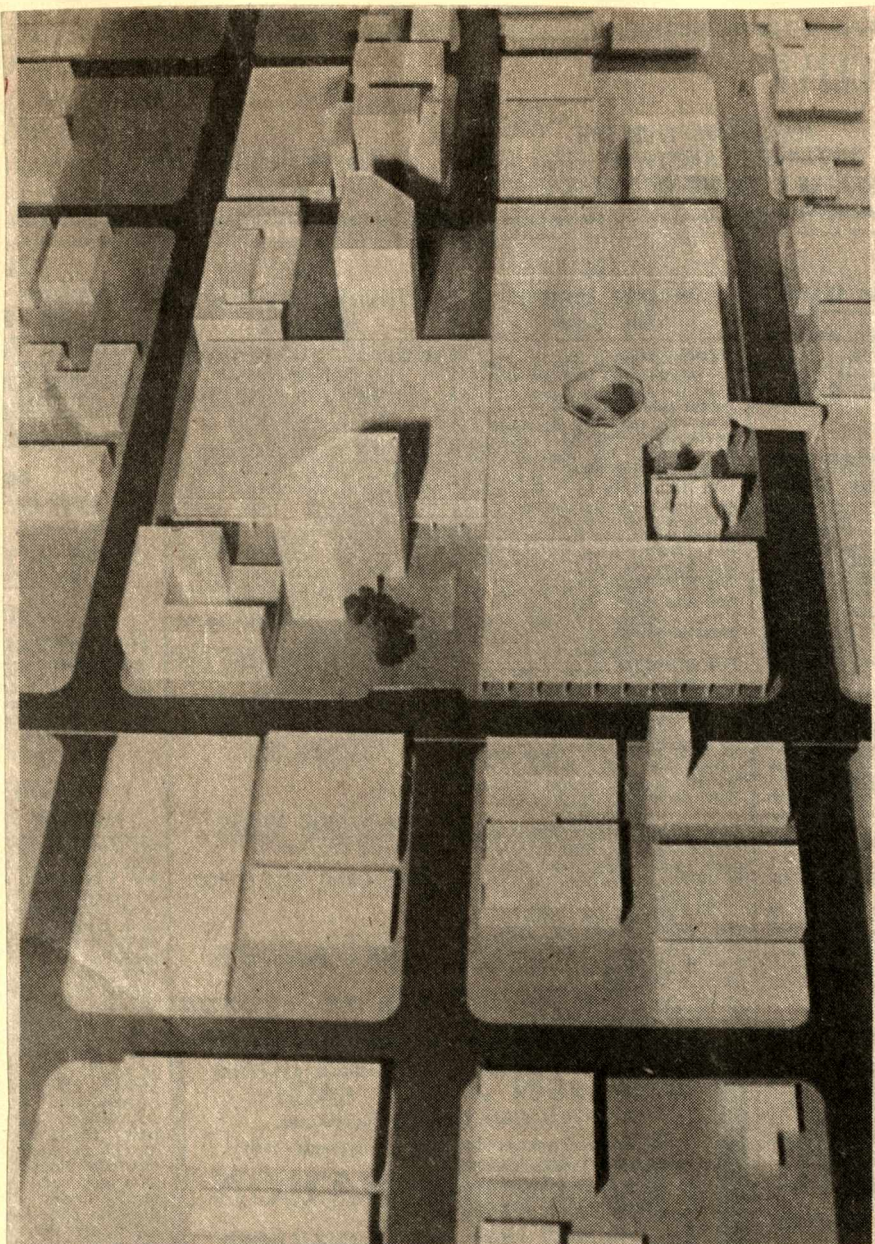
Other phases that could develop from the retail complex, according to project officials, are a downtown hotel with a convention emphasis and downtown housing.

Initial estimates of all phases placed the total cost at about \$50 million.

Many current buildings in the four-block area will have to be torn down for the project to be developed as currently planned.

No model of the project currently is available for public display.

(over)



DOWNTOWN MODEL — The firm of David Hocker & Associates, developers of the proposed \$50 million downtown revitalization project, had a scale model of the planned changes on display at City Hall Thursday.

Staff Photo/Bill Williams

Downtown plans topic of discussion for three groups

Center Planning (TH) - Architectural Commission

T NOV 20 1980

By PATRICIA KRAPESH
Tribune Staff Writer

Behind-the-scenes discussions on the downtown development project in Terre Haute occurred Wednesday between two representatives of the architectural firm Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) and three groups of people with varied concerns and interests in the future of the city's central business district.

Members of the architectural commission of Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc. met with SOM architects Peter Nelson and Susan Wurdeman for discussion of two primary concerns, according to Bill Pickett, chairman of the commission.

"One has to do with the consideration of preservation and demolition and the fact that all proposals that have been presented so far include tearing down buildings" that are included in the survey of downtown buildings for historical nomination, he said. "It's our history embodied in architecture," he added.

"The second concern is design and whether or not the structure (the proposed Wabash Centre) will be a place where people like to come, and will it be distinctive, will it be a credit to downtown Terre Haute?" Pickett said.

About the outcome of the meeting at which the model for the downtown center was presented and discussed, he commented, "My impressions were that progress is being made, but it's still very tentative... plans about the downtown mall are simply proposals. All these (meetings between the architects and local groups) are a means to stimulate discussion about what ought to be in the downtown area."

Not a great deal will be done in terms of finalized plans until the Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) application for funds has been approved, Pickett pointed out.

A "frank exchange" of ideas between commission members and the architects was the tone of the meeting, according to Pickett. "They were very open to us," he added.

Efforts to incorporate selected historically significant structures in the downtown development plans have already been and are currently being considered by the architects, Pickett learned during the meeting.

Among the questions asked by architectural commission members, for example, was whether the design concept for the mall included a play area for children. Pickett said a variety of questions and concerns were discussed at the session which was closed to local media at the request of the architectural commission.

A second meeting Wednesday afternoon focused on the possibility of a downtown transfer facility for Terre Haute Mass Transit, its possible location and the probability of federal transportation funds to assist with the project.

"I guess we're looking at Sixth and Ohio right now, but that's really tentative," Tony McCaulay, transportation planner for West Central Indiana Economic Development District, said.

"Someplace for all the buses to pull in together and someplace for people to wait without being exposed to all the rain and cold weather" is the need, he explained.

The transfer facility could possibly be part of a proposed parking garage to service the downtown center, according to McCaulay. The proposed bus terminal would be across the street from the mall, he said.

Discussions at this stage are preliminary and speculative.

"We're actually waiting until they (developer Hocker & Associates) get confirmed commitments from the tenants of the mall before we can apply for government money," McCaulay explained.

Transportation manager Jim Rosa said of the meeting, "It looked real pleasing," and added, "having the buses all in one location would be advantageous for the bus riders, enabling them to make easy transfers from one bus to another."

A late afternoon meeting with representatives of the Swope Art Gallery included a presentation of the model for the downtown and discussion of relocation possibilities for the Swope from its current Seventh street location. This meeting also was in closed session to local media, at the request of the developer, according to Marc Elliott, director of the Redevelopment Department. Elliott explained the developer's position was that private business negotiations would be discussed.

Dr. Alan Rankin, president of the Board of Managers of the Sheldon Swope Art Gallery, said the session lasted about half an hour and included a presentation of the "whole redevelopment plan downtown." He commented, "There was nothing there that hundreds of other people haven't seen."

Concerning the relocation possibilities for the Swope, Rankin indicated the actual discussion at the meeting was not for public release, apparently due to the developer's request that the session include only involved parties.

However, in relation to a "rumor" that the Swope Art Gallery could relocate in the Federal Building at Sixth and Cherry streets and the postal facilities would be moved to another location, Rankin said, "I've heard the same rumor."

Vigo County Public Library

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City Planning (T.H.)
**Downtown
development
discussed**
T DEC 2 1980

By PATRICIA KRAPESH
Tribune Staff Writer

By the end of June or the beginning of July 1981, the Wabash Centre downtown development project should be "Go," contingent upon Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) funds being awarded at that time, according to Charles H. Burton, director of the urban development division of David Hocker & Associates.

Burton addressed a large group this morning at a Terre Haute Committee for Area Progress Inc. meeting at the Vigo County Public Library.

If the UDAG grant funds are not approved, "we've got a serious problem," Burton said. "If it were feasible without them, we wouldn't apply ... in the first place."

However, Burton did not say the project would be aborted if the UDAG funds were not approved. After some explanation, the indication was that the project would proceed, but in what fashion was not clarified. (Based on prior reports from Marc Elliott, director of the Department of Redevelopment, reapplication or new application for UDAG funds could occur. This, though, would postpone the project.)

Saying that "retail" is probably the most important component of the proposed downtown project, Burton reported that negotiations are ongoing to secure preliminary commitments from anchor tenants — a necessity before the city can apply for UDAG funds or Hocker can seek private sector financing.

Stressing the community involvement factor, Burton said, "At this stage of our progress, the interchange is very important." He explained that constructive criticism is necessary to put together a project that will work.

Burton estimates that to date he has spoken with 500 to 600 people about the Wabash Centre project. "Eventually we'll get down to one-to-one with everyone that's going to be there," he said.

"The thing that concerns me the most, people really need to understand that they're privy to things that people normally wouldn't know, for example with a shopping center.... Because this is a community project, what they are seeing is early concepts. We're open to criticism until we get down to what exactly the project finally becomes," he explained.

With many people curious about the negotiations between the Hocker firm and potential anchor tenants, Burton clarified that those particular business discussions are "private business matters" between the parties involved.

Is there resistance to the downtown project? Not really "resistance," according to both Mayor Pete Chalos and Burton.

Burton specifically gauged the general attitude among involved citizens as one of "concern," rather than resistance. "People are generally committed to something happening downtown," he said.

Chalos said he can understand that concern. "I think its normal concern for their future," he commented. "I think it's up to us and the developer to alleviate anxieties and help with plans for people in the area," he added.

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City Planning - T. H.

Current downtown project 'light years ahead' of others

Community Affairs File

Community Affairs File

By PATRICIA KRAPESH
Tribune Staff Writer

"Where we are today is light years ahead of where anybody has been," Charles Burton, director of the urban development division of David Hocker & Associates, told The TRIBUNE this week while discussing the status of the proposed downtown development.

"We're getting down to cases," he added.

Past remarks have underscored that the downtown project is an evolutionary process in which "people are watching the decisions being made."

In those terms, 1981 should be a signal year as the pieces of the process begin to gel toward a projected autumn construction date (according to earlier reports).

And, the first month of the new year may signal the beginnings of some key announcements, as outlined by Burton.

The developer said he is "hopeful" that statements about anchor tenants for the project will be forthcoming the beginning of January.

With a reminder that negotiations with potential anchor tenants have been ongoing, he clarified — and stressed — that any announcements next month will probably declare only

a "commitment of interest to negotiate."

This commitment of "interest" is the primary step toward a secondary commitment by anchor tenants in which they actually contract to participate in the proposed Wabash Centre mall or adjacent development. The second round of negotiations includes specific lease details and agreements, as explained by Burton.

"The thing that we're trying to do now is get over a major benchmark," Burton remarked.

The reference point the developer referred to includes the final determination of a site for the redevelopment project and the results of a market study which Burton said has been under way for three to four weeks. He indicated that these two things are interrelated and crucial to negotiations with potential anchor tenants.

Burton said preliminary findings of the market study, conducted by real estate market research consultants with Realty Research Corp., Chicago, are also expected by the beginning of January. The market study concentrates on data for two types of markets — department stores and mall shops.

"Possibly," he said, (stressing the implied "maybe") the final decision

on the site will be announced next month also.

Assuming the new year will bring with it the anticipated commitment of "interest" to negotiate by two department stores and two prime office tenants, negotiations from that point will move to cost estimates, Burton explained.

He said a proforma, based on an economic feasibility analysis, will provide the development team with a "target." From that point, he said, consultations will "get down to specific leases... proposals to negotiating parties."

Next, the developer hopes for "accepted proposals to lease" and then the negotiations progress to commitments between the two parties (developer and prospective tenant) in which the two "exchange terms."

Though it might seem that December progress on negotiations would be hampered, if only as a psychological depressant, by prime interest rates skyrocketing into the 20s percentile, Burton did not express any discouraging words.

According to past reports of projected plans, the city will probably loan the developer a portion of the funds to finance the project and additional funds will probably be borrowed by the developer from a private sector firm such as a life insurance company.

The city loan hinges on acceptance of an application for Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) funds. However, preliminary commitments from anchor tenants are necessary before the city can submit the UDAG application and also for the developer to submit private sector loan applications.

Interest rates and the "tightness" and "lack of availability" of money are certainly realistic concerns, Burton asserted. But, with "retail" the most important component of the proposed downtown project, he also pointed out that the busiest month of the year for retailers is not the time when major decisions and commitments of the scope necessary for the downtown project will generally be made.

He suggested that the new year will hopefully bring, not only anticipated commitments to the downtown project, but also the realization of optimistic economic predictions by some experts, in conjunction with the president-elect's inauguration.

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Downtown Improvement Project ??

*City Planning
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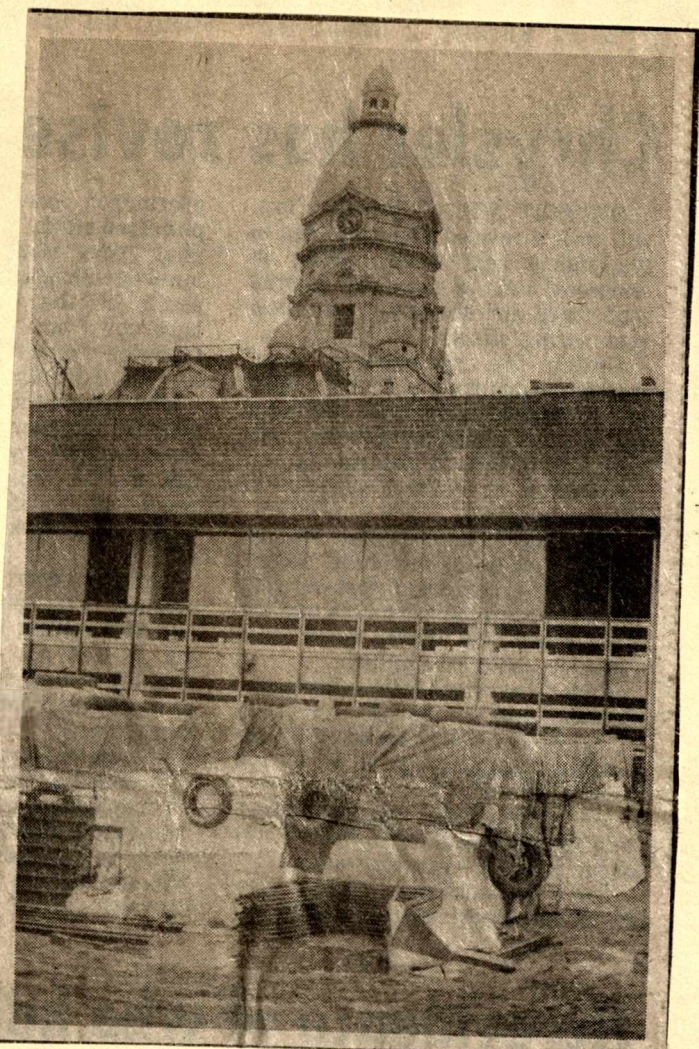
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Changing appearance at downtown intersection

The wrecking ball takes aim at the vacant building on the southeast corner of Third Street and Wabash Avenue once occupied by Smith Hardware while construction work continues across Third Street where crews installed windows recently for the new Vigo County jail.

Staff Photo/Rick Cochran



Downtown Project

Greatest First-Year Effort?

City Planning (T.H.) & Mayors (T.H.)
By J. BLAINE AKERS, Star Staff Writer

Pete Chalos has brought about change in city government during his freshman year as mayor. The cloud of doubt and suspicion which hovered over City Hall during the final stages of the former city administration has for now dissipated. While Chalos continues to bask in the sunlight of first-year success, his critics warn there may be dark clouds on the horizon.

A STAR ANALYSIS

There is no doubt Chalos has taken a politically fractured city administration and molded it into a manageable unit capable of servicing the needs of the public or, at least, listening to their problems and trying to do something about them.

Yet, critics of the first-year mayor claim he is self-serving and contend he has exceeded his executive powers at times. They say Chalos initiated maneuvers to oust Robert Payne, redevelopment director and Kirby Smith, housing authority director, because of personal grudges against the two men. There is no doubt Chalos is in charge and that his pre-election plans did involve getting rid of Payne and Smith for whatever reasons be they personal or professional.

For the most part, however, criticism of Chalos'

actions has been minimal. The overwhelming majority of voters which carried him into the mayor's office still support him, and his neighborhood walks with other city workers tend to reinforce his style of government leadership. He likes personal contact with residents of Terre Haute, even though citizens often do not fully understand he cannot solve all their problems. Chalos is careful not to promise immediate solutions since he is painstakingly aware his hands are tied by state and federal bureaucracy.

Where does the mayor stand on his campaign "promises"? His first priority was to get local, state and federal officials together to consummate plans for the construction of a railroad overpass on U.S. 41 at the Conrail tracks near Tippecanoe Street. Plans have not yet been completed, but project officials are closer to a construction starting date. Chalos isn't totally satisfied with the progress of the project, but the overpass plan has advanced significantly during the first year of the mayor's term.

One area to which the mayor has been unable to devote full attention is annexation. City attorneys have been ordered to prepare paperwork for proposed annexation of certain parts of Honey Creek Township, but efforts have been stalled because of priorities such as the census and the Wabash Centre downtown development project.

S JAN 1 1981

This project, perhaps, is the greatest accomplishment by Chalos in the first 12 months of office is the downtown project. Through the efforts of the city's redevelopment staff and the consulting firm of Hocker & Associates, the city administration has been able to put together pieces of the downtown jigsaw puzzle which, despite earlier attempts, had been elusively unattainable.

Chalos realizes the importance of the venture which is aimed at saving a struggling downtown economy. He has greatly trusted the consulting firm and his political future as a doer and not just a talker depends heavily on the ability or inability of that planning group.

The Democrat mayor is not accustomed to losing. As a basketball coach before entering the political arena, Chalos was a winner. Politically, in Terre Haute, he's undefeated. He dislikes losing and to have suffered the setback in the recent census suit is a bitter pill for him to swallow.

He has been able to celebrate the political honeymoon unscathed. Political enemies, of course, are lying in wait anticipating a stumble or fall. His greatest enemies may be the Republican-controlled state legislature and U.S. Congress. He realizes it will be difficult for a Democrat city administration to convince Republican legislators to look favorably on Terre Haute when it comes to distributing funds for public programs.

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T JAN 12 1981

Year saw downtown birth, rebirth, death

While some merchants have adopted a "wait and see" attitude since the announcement of a possible site for the proposed downtown redevelopment, others have moved forward this past year and a half with investments in new downtown locations and repairs to buildings already occupied.

In some cases, remodeling had already been scheduled and money budgeted before anyone realized that the die for the downtown redevelopment effort might be cast one way or the other during the current calendar year.

Birth, rebirth and death were symbolic of changes in the downtown's physical appearance in 1980 as the opening of new businesses, restoration of old ones and destruction of some defunct ones happened simultaneously.

Here is an overview:

Demolition of the building which housed the Root Store, Libson Shop and Root's Beauty Salon occurred in February of last year. Now the vacant land is the view from the second-story window of the new Pink Flamingo restaurant and lounge located in the Wolf Building at 618 Wabash Ave.

Other tenants, new to this building last year, include Raftis: The Agency, TV Facts, Pre-Press Graphics and Reader Construction. The building had been vacant for an extended period of time, and then in the fall of 1979, White Rabbit Copy Center, Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenner & Smith Inc., Indiana Business College and Gems by Kofmehl all assumed occupancy in the centrally located structure.

Cheryl Sanders, owner of Chez Cherie at 5 S. Seventh St., just opened her shop's doors in October. "I'm optimistic that the downtown area can survive changes

and benefit from changes," she said.

New downtown commitments will continue in 1981, as a result of leases signed in 1980. One new tenant of the old Osco's building at 667 Wabash Ave. is Robert L. Nichols, owner of a Big Red Q Quickprint Center franchise. Nichols hopes to assume occupancy within the next two weeks. While Bill Roan, Orpheum Hair Imagineers, plans to open the Uptown Orpheum on March 1 in an adjacent space in the building. (Roan's business will be moving from the current Seventh Street location.)

Faith in the downtown was demonstrated by a group of former Root's salon beauticians in December of 1979. The women lost their downtown location and did not want to transfer to the Honey Creek Square shop. The hairdressers opted to form their own corporation - Downtown Hair Designers, 515 Wabash Ave. - in order to remain downtown and service their regular customers.

While demolition of some dilapidated structures continues, many merchants invested considerable sums of money toward remodeling and restoration of their downtown businesses.

Abe Malooley, of the Saratoga Cafe, estimated he spent about \$40,000 toward improvements, which included exterior restoration of the building at 431 Wabash Ave. Malooley said, "People told me, 'I'm glad you're not tearing it down or covering it up... You've set the pace for the downtown.'"

Substantive remodeling was also undertaken by IBM, 22 N. Fifth St., to three floors of the building. Forrest Sherer Inc., located in the Chanticleer Building at 24 N. Sixth St., also completed extensive office remodeling. Painting and interior repairs and remodeling of the Haag Drug Co., 600 Wabash Ave., were begun in July of last year.

Interior remodeling of Nick's Salon of Styles, 625 Cherry St., was another improvement project in 1980. But

Nick Anderson, owner of two salons, spoke frankly about what he chose not to do. Saying that he had the opportunity to lease an adjacent space to his now existing shop, Anderson said he declined the very offer which he would have given his "eye-teeth" for just three years ago.

The problem he spoke of at length — parking. And the fact that with the "proposed" downtown discussions, no one is doing anything about the lack of parking because everyone is waiting to see what will happen. This comment was echoed by some other merchants recently interviewed.

Clarifying that he is in support of downtown redevelopment, Anderson commented, "We (downtown merchants) feel that we have the power, the strength and everything that goes along with it to promote jobs and goodwill to the community, but we can't do anything if our hands are tied or if things are uncertain."

In spite of uncertainties, even more merchants went ahead with improvements, such as Fischer Auto Supply, 901 Wabash Ave., and WAAC radio, 643 Ohio, who undertook major remodeling and renovation with the moving of their offices from the second floor of the building to a ground floor location.

Relocation within, or to, the downtown played yet another role in the year of progress. World Wide Travel Agency, formerly next door to the Terre Haute House, opted to remain downtown and moved to remodeled quarters at 669 Ohio St. Between Wabash and Ohio on Eighth Street, the Blood Plasma Donor Center now occupies a large space in the Odd Fellows Building.

With all the busy-ness of moving and rehabilitation of structures, demolition activity was preceded by the issuance of wrecking permits from city building inspector Jim Beikman's office. Demolition of the Smith Hardware Building, on the corner of Wabash Avenue and Third street, began in 1980 and will be completed this year.

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MONDAY

Outlook

ON TERRE HAUTE

City Planning (T.H.)

T JAN 12 1981

Downtown: '80 brought action; '81 may bring results

Editor's Note: Staff Writer Patricia Krapesh takes a look at developments in downtown Terre Haute during the past year — and looks ahead to what 1981 may bring in this special report.

The downtown view in 1981 may change drastically as a result of progress made last year toward revitalization of Terre Haute's "traditional" central business district.

The past year was marked by aggressive action on the part of downtown redevelopment proponents, including Mayor Pete Chalos who adopted a "let's do it" attitude and spearheaded efforts to make the downtown project a reality.

The wheels were already in motion as a result of groundwork by not-for-profit groups such as Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc. (THCI), who were actively supportive of downtown restoration and development.

Forward movement increased when administrative changes occurred within city hall and one city department's duties were redefined and clarified with respect to pursuance of federal funds, such as Urban Development Action Grants (UDAG). (The proposed downtown project hinges on the UDAG funds being granted. If awarded, they will be loaned to the developer by the city of Terre Haute.)

City history and Indiana statutes came into play when the city council rescinded a resolution that had formerly placed responsibility for pursuance of UDAG monies and other programs with the Terre Haute Housing Authority (The rescinded resolution had transferred these same duties from the redevelopment department to the housing authority at an earlier date.) As a result of the council's July action, the Terre Haute Department of Redevelopment began exercising additional responsibility.

Redevelopment Director Marc Elliott explained that there was no shift in authority or assumption of new authority by the department. The authority the department began using already existed under state statutes, Elliott said, and the department merely began "exercising responsibility" which had not been used "previously."

At the beginning of the summer THCI was still functioning, in some instances, as an unofficial host to possible downtown developers.

In the meantime, the redevelopment department "assembled all reports on the downtown," as explained by Elliott, and issued invitations to companies who had not already been interviewed.

Toward the end of August an agreement was established between David Hocker & Associates and Terre Haute to work toward the development of a mixed use project in the downtown area. It was estimated that the proposed three-phase project would cost in the neighborhood of \$50 million.

The project would include a medium-size shopping mall with a minimum of three department stores, retail stores and possibly a cinema, covering an area of approximately 400,000 square feet; two office towers of 100,000 square feet each; a hotel consisting of not less than 250 rooms which would include a conference center; and possibly a central transit center.

The first phase, which is all that the agreement with Hocker covered, would include retail and office facilities. The estimated cost of construction for Phase I was projected to be between \$35 and \$40 million.

With the selection of a developer, the pace quickened and, understandably, public interest heightened.

At the beginning of September, the first of two public hearings concerning the downtown was attended by 70 to 80 Terre Haute residents. The sizeable turnout may be attributed to a combination of curiosity, support for the effort to revitalize the

Vigo County Public Library

Community Affairs File

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downtown and concern.

Some downtown merchants were faced with the possibility that their retail space, whether leased or owned, might be among those buildings which would eventually be slated for demolition "if" the project moved ahead.

Early reports on local merchant reaction were mixed, as interested parties continued to seek information.

Meanwhile, Hocker representative Charles Burton, director of the urban development division of the company, was faced with the task of translating a proposed \$50 million project and many of its complexities into simple terms for the general public.

Assistance was provided by the redevelopment department. In some corners, the city department and the developer were up against attitudes which assumed that many decisions were occurring behind closed doors. A continuous theme surfaced as Elliott and Burton repeatedly advised the public that decisions and the announcements of detail were an evolving process based on private and public input.

Elliott clarified for media and the public that many of the decisions were interrelated.

At a second public hearing toward the end of September, Burton announced an "optimum site" for the development — a four-block area bounded by Seventh, Cherry, Sixth and Ohio streets.

As early as this meeting, it was indicated that buildings to be saved from demolition if the proposed site plan reached the adoption stage included the Federal Building, the First Congregational Church and the Deming Center.

By the end of October a model came to town, but it wasn't the fashion variety. Burton unveiled a preliminary project model which was designed for review by prospective tenants. He explained that final details on the project could and probably would change, according to tenant needs.

The architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) had been selected by the developer to design the downtown project and shopping mall, which had come to be referred to as the "Wabash Centre." And, Paul Pfister, Pfister Co. Inc., was selected by the developer to negotiate the land acquisitions for the project.

In November, two SOM representatives spent the day in the city meeting with three different groups, including representatives of the Swope Art Gallery. An unconfirmed rumor was circulating around this

time that the Swope gallery could relocate in the Federal Building and the postal facilities would be moved to another location. The Swope meeting was not open to the public because it was considered private business negotiations.

The first week in December, a Terre Haute Committee for Area Progress (CAP) meeting drew higher than usual attendance with Burton as the scheduled guest speaker. By that date, he said he had spoken with 500 to 600 people about the Wabash Centre project. At this meeting, Burton briefly discussed the core importance of the UDAG grant saying that without it, the project "probably wouldn't happen."

Concerning a timetable, Burton said that if the grant became available in June 1981 and the city had an urban development plan, then the Hocker firm could begin property acquisition through options. Construction would not begin until the next year, or early spring of 1982, he said, with a projected opening of the downtown center in the summer of 1984.

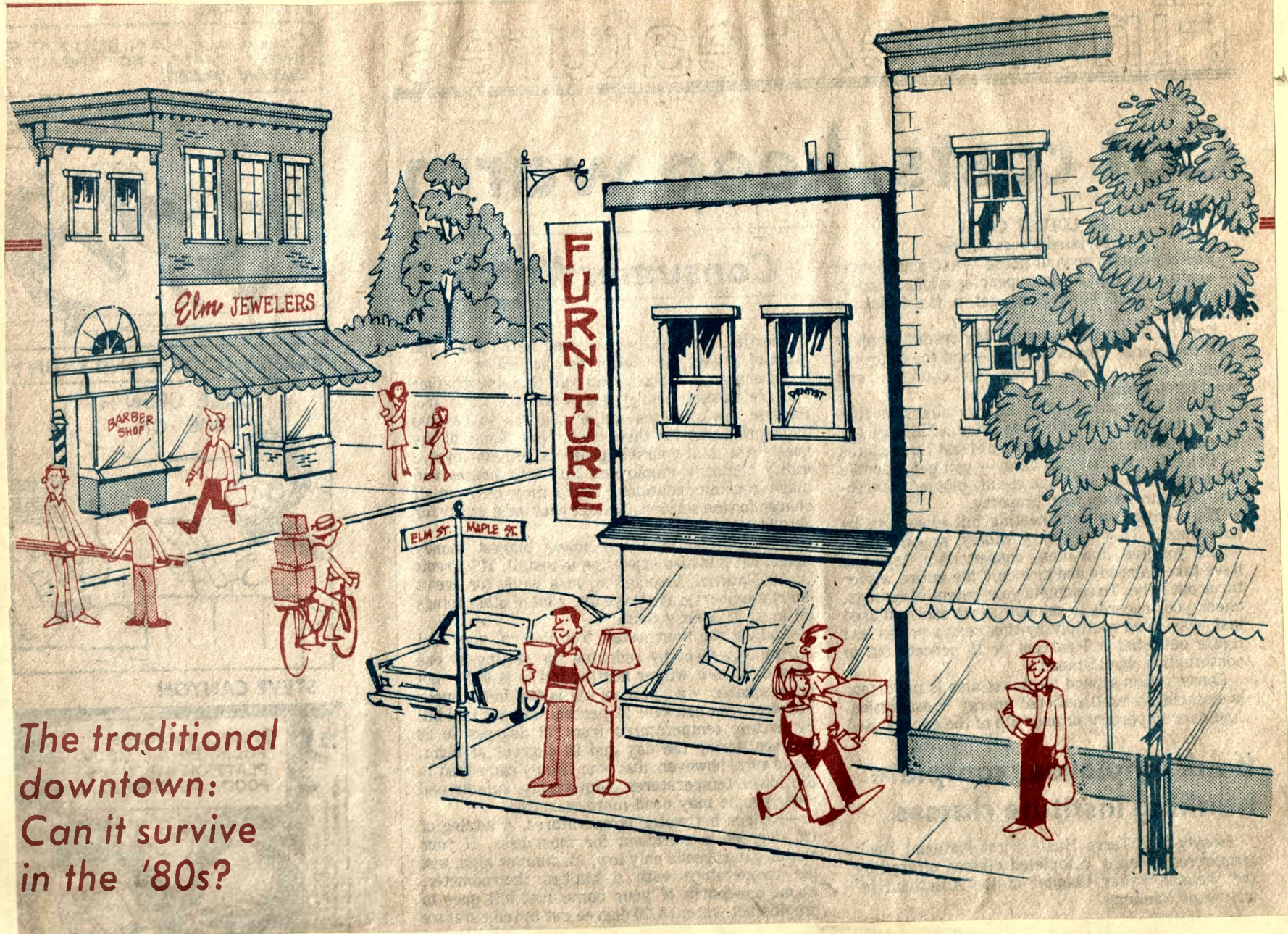
In an update interview with Burton in mid-December, he described progress on the downtown project thus far as "light years ahead" of where previous efforts had been. He also said January may be a month of important announcements concerning the project — including, "hopefully," the names of anchor tenants who have made a preliminary "commitment of interest to negotiate."

And, at the end of 1980, the selection and awarding of a contract to G. Reynolds Watkins Consulting Engineers Inc. (GRW) to prepare the downtown urban renewal plan was made by the city Redevelopment Commission. The urban renewal plan is an integral component to achieving proposed downtown development. The plan will serve to strengthen the competitiveness of the UDAG application.

A year filled with events toward the realization of an effort under discussion for quite some time has ended. This past year may prove to be the prelude to a much hoped-for, by many, final movement in the orchestration to revitalize the downtown.

Redevelopment director Elliott chose to comment on an attitude that was exhibited in the year past.

The thing that was especially notable in 1980, he said, was "the willingness of some of the major businessmen in Terre Haute to cooperate and work with the city, rather than developing projects independently."



The traditional
downtown:
Can it survive
in the '80s?

City Planning 174 S FEB 12 1981

Downtown Survey Planned

Downtown business council of the Terre Haute Area Chamber of Commerce has initiated a survey of downtown merchants in regard to the downtown development project as proposed by the development firm of Hocker and Associates, according to Ross Hedges, chamber president. He said the council, under the leadership of Herm Rassel, has prepared a questionnaire for the merchants and the results will be used as input to the Terre Haute Redevelopment Department and to help establish chamber policy about the development plans. Five questions will be posed: do you support or oppose the development project; if the development project becomes a reality, do you anticipate moving out of the downtown area; relocating in the downtown mall; staying in the same location; are you a land owner or tenant, and comments.

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Community Affairs File

Vigo County Public Library

Changes In Downtown Development Site Plans Under Consideration, Mayor Says

S FEB 18 1981

By J. BLAINE AKERS, Star Staff Writer

A revision in the site plan for the proposed Wabash Centre downtown development project is being considered, Mayor Pete Chalos said Tuesday.

Chalos discussed the project and other issues, including annexation, during his monthly Tuesday with the Press at City Hall. The mayor said one of three annexation ordinances affecting the Honey

Creek area is to be introduced at a special meeting of the Terre Haute City Council later this month.

According to Chalos, developers for Wabash Centre are reviewing alternate site plans for the \$50 million construction project. He said the development area still encompasses from Ohio to Cherry streets between Sixth and Seventh streets, however revised plans under consideration would keep Wabash Avenue open to traffic. An earlier proposal called for construction of a mall-type building spanning Wabash Avenue.

Marc Elliott, director of the redevelopment department coordinating the project with developers Hocker & Associates, said a definite site plan has not been selected.

"Until we get commitments from our anchor tenants, a decision on a specific site plan will not be made. A revision of the previously considered site plan is being discussed with the anchor tenants, however," Elliott explained. Elliott said it is hopeful a UDAG application for the downtown project will be submitted in May. He said other types of financing to supplement private investment may be considered as a result of President Reagan's plan to eliminate or reduce funding of the UDAG program.

Tuesday, Mayor Chalos said one of three annexation bills will be introduced shortly in the City Council. He said city attorneys are completing a 20-page addendum to the ordinance which includes a finance plan explaining how the city administration intends to pay for services to the annexed area.

Recent efforts to annex portions of the Honey Creek area failed, Chalos said, because the city administration was unable to prove its means for providing services to the area.

"I think the way we are approaching annexation will be successful. It is a matter of strategy," Chalos said.

The mayor also discussed the city's concern for continued operations at Hyte Center and efforts to save Stran Steel. Chalos said the city intends to appropriate its share to offset utility costs at Hyte Center and has met with directors at the center to discuss programs which could be terminated since the United Way has voted not to allocate funds to Hyte Center.

The mayor said he is willing to discuss economic development programs to prevent Stran Steel from closing its operations here. The company closed its production facilities, although the engineering/drafting division remains operative.

Downtown project changes discussed

By BRYAN TAYLOR
Tribune Staff Writer

Some possible changes in the proposed downtown redevelopment project are being discussed among parties involved in the project, according to city officials.

Mayor Pete Chalos reported this morning some changes could be seen in the proposed downtown complex that is being developed by David Hocker and Associates, Kentucky.

Although no specifics of the discussed changes were revealed, Chalos indicated they might involve locations of various parts of the complex.

Chalos made his remarks today at his monthly "Tuesday With the Press" session.

Chalos said the downtown project could change in directions other than the boundaries previously announced. Those boundaries were Seventh, Cherry, Sixth and Ohio streets.

One change being discussed, according to Chalos, is leaving Wabash Avenue open. Under a plan revealed last fall, that street would have been closed for construction of the project.

Marc Elliott, director of the Department of Redevelopment, said some changes are being discussed, but he cautioned they are only in the discussion stage and nothing final has been determined.

On another downtown topic, Chalos reported letters of commitment have been received from some prospective tenants for the complex.

Those letters are needed if the city is to receive an Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) for the project.

Chalos expressed some concern the UDAG program might be in jeopardy

if President Reagan makes some of the federal cuts that have been reported in some media.

When the city finally does apply for UDAG money for the project, the plans must be subjected to a public hearing, the mayor pointed out. Also, an urban renewal plan being developed for the project is to be open for public review.

The next UDAG funding deadline is May, according to Elliott. Chalos said much of the project's progress will depend on interest rates affecting investment.

Other topics discussed this morning included:

•**ANNEXATION** — A special meeting of the City Council could be called next week for introduction of an ordinance to annex some business portions of the Honey Creek Square area, Chalos reported. A total of three separate ordinances for that southside area are being prepared.

•**STRAN STEEL** — The city has offered any assistance it can to help keep that industry in Terre Haute, the mayor said. Stran officials have announced they intend to close most of their operation here.

•**NEW INDUSTRY** — Three industries have been shown potential sites in the city, according to Chalos.

•**HYTE CENTER** — The administration has met with HYTE officials to discuss a recent United Way funding cut for that operation. The city will be making some federal revenue sharing money available to help meet utility and custodian costs for the center, Chalos stated. However, he pointed out, no plans have been made for the administration to assume responsibility for center programs.

Downtown Update...

City Planning

Merchants' Survey Released; Project Discussed

T MAR 12 1981

The word "downtown" was included in the scheduled discussion topic for a Wednesday meeting of the Terre Haute Committee for Area Progress and an estimated 100 people convened.

According to reports, some people anticipated that the company names of "anchor tenants" for the proposed Wabash Centre downtown redevelopment project would be announced at the meeting.

Charles Burton, director of the urban development division of David Hocker & Associates, said, "When we get to the point where we're announcing the key tenants" for the project, "I promise you it will be a big affair and it will be a joint announcement."

The scheduled focus of the meeting, as announced by Ross Hedges, president of the Terre Haute Area Chamber of Commerce, was to discuss the results of a "Survey of Attitudes Regarding the Downtown Development Project."

Hedges said later in the day, "The purpose of the meeting was to do nothing more than give Hocker the report of the survey to give them the benefit of the knowledge we had gained through it."

He added, "There were some concerns from the merchants, as a

result of the survey, that needed to be answered."

According to the chamber's report of survey results, a total of 48 business people, with enterprises located in or adjacent to the downtown area, responded.

Hedges said approximately 50 were given survey forms.

Overall results indicated that 62.5 percent of those people surveyed were supportive of the project, while 18.75 percent were opposed to the development plans, and 18.75 percent were reportedly undecided.

Burton addressed stated concerns, in most instances related to respondents who would be "directly affected" by the downtown development plans.

Specific concerns listed at the conclusion of the survey report included mention that merchants be "kept current on changes and any new developments on (the) project."

Burton said, "I wish I could talk to everybody all the time, but I can't so we do the best we can and we're trying to take our steps from a logical sequence one at a time and try to deal with the serious problems."

"There a place and a time for every interest group or individual that needs to be dealt with on a one-

on-one basis or in groups. And, the fact that we haven't gotten to everybody simply means that we haven't gotten to that point where there was a need to individually sit down and work problems out with a specific individual group, but we're getting there."

During a press conference following the meeting Burton said, "We have talked to a number of anchor retailers. We have narrowed it down to four that have definitely expressed interest and two others that are probing... and we have people who want to make a deal — who want to negotiate."

"Now the ball is back in our court," he remarked.

Announcing that the plan has been "adjusted... in several ways," Burton also revealed that "there's a lot of sentiment for keeping the main drag (Wabash Avenue) open."

Other statements or clarifications offered by Burton in relation to expressed concerns and questions included the following:

— Based on final and preliminary results of a marketing study of Terre Haute, which is two-thirds completed, Burton said, "I'm extremely pleased with what we've learned. We think we are right on target with our

concept."

—About diversified business interests being represented in the proposed downtown project, "The marketing effort will be diversified, but it won't be as broad-based as a mall the size of Honey Creek or larger."

—Merchant concern over lease cost received the following response: "I'm concerned about it too." Burton said, "The rent goes up because the cost goes up. It's a concern that I understand, but it's one that I have very little control over."

—Explaining that after it has been determined whether the property will be purchased by either the Hocker firm or Terre Haute, Burton said, "Then, we go into a phase where we actually go out and start trying to seek options to purchase individual pieces of property and work with individual tenants — if they're not the owner — on relocation and settlements for relocation." Burton said that phase may happen by late summer or early fall.

—On the subject of federal funds, Burton remarked, "I think we just have to wait and see. The game is going to change and the rules are going to change, but I think there's going to be some money there."

Vigo County Public Library

Community Affairs File

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No Answers

Some Still Ask Questions, But Find

T MAR 12 1981

Along with many details yet to be determined, some downtown merchants were still asking questions for which there were no answers during the Wednesday meeting devoted to discussion and clarification of downtown developments.

"Apparently, they must not be to a point that they can tell us anything," commented Herm Rassel, chairman of the Downtown Business Council.

The morning meeting was at the request of the Terre Haute Area Chamber of Commerce board of directors, according to Rassel. "The Chamber board has been a little concerned for the people in the 'destruction block,'" he remarked.

The recently conducted survey of attitudes regarding the downtown development was Rassel's idea. As chairman of the DBC, he explained, "I didn't feel that I could make

statements without some input from other people."

He remarked earlier, "No one had asked anyone in the area what they thought."

Rassel confirmed that some downtown merchants have repeatedly expressed concern about what will happen to existing businesses if and when the project reaches the construction phase. But he also confirmed that, generally, those merchants directly affected by proposed plans thus far have not expressed opposition to the downtown redevelopment plans.

Concerning his own business, Rassel said, "We've been in this location since 1932, what am I supposed to do while they're tearing down and rebuilding?"

His assessment of the current situation: "I think they have to get the anchor tenants, and then the money. Until they do that, we as small merchants, just sit back and

wait."

The DBC chairman said he, personally, thinks the proposed project's chances for becoming a reality were greater than any past efforts. "I think probably because the city administration is more for it," he explained.

However, due to the current lack of definite commitments, Rassel said, "I think we (downtown merchants) ought to just proceed as if nothing is going to happen and then find out later what is going to happen."

Chamber board president Robert Rouse commented on an unusual position for the Chamber in relation to the proposed project. He said, "I think the Chamber will find itself in somewhat of a precarious situation because I think the Chamber generally would support the concept of the downtown renovation — from the concept of good for the entire community — but at the same time we have

individual members, such as Herm Rassel... who might be critically affected."

He continued, "We have to be concerned about their interests, but at the same time, we need to be concerned about the general community.... Everyone wants what's best for Terre Haute."

Chamber president Ross Hedges told the Tribune-Star, "Due to the leadership of Herm Rassel, we have seen in writing the first indication of attitudes of people who will be affected by the downtown development project."

He added that the Chamber has recognized all along "the problems that we are going to have conceptually when it comes down to the wire

"The action that we have taken is to create as much dialogue as possible, in hopes that will minimize problems down the road."

Community Affairs File

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PROFESSOR WILLIAM PICKETT

Historical Factor Should Play Role In Development

City Planning (T.H.)

Virtually any building which is at least 50 years old has the potential to be historically significant. That does not mean each building that old should be preserved, according to Dr. William B. Pickett, professor at Rose Hulman Institute.

However, historical significance as well as economic considerations should be part of any decision to raze or restore old buildings, he said. Pickett chairs the architectural commission of Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc. and is past president of the Vigo County Historical Society.

Before the completion of the downtown survey, no information was really available on the historical significance of the buildings. Decisions to tear down buildings were based only on economic considerations, according to Pickett.

The survey, which was done as part of the nomination of five districts to the National Register of Historic places, assessed the buildings for both their historical and architectural importance.

No building can be listed on the national register without the permission of its owner, Pickett said. Even if the building is listed, the owner is not prohibited from leveling it, provided no razing is done with federal funds.

There can be advantages for owners of buildings listed on the historical register, Pickett noted. Tax breaks are available for owners and at one time there were federal grants which could be obtained for restoration work. However, under the new administration, it is not known if those grants will still be available.

Pickett envisions a downtown which includes buildings that are examples of modern as well as historical architecture. Newer buildings, he noted, become historical in the future and do not interfere with a historic downtown.

Downtown Terre Haute does need new retail development, Pickett said. To be a vital neighborhood, downtown "needs people there at all times of day." There should be housing downtown, grocery stores for people who live there, entertainment facilities and more services as well as additional retail establishments.

A comprehensive approach is needed, Pickett said. Downtown should be a place people like to be. In addition, with the presence of the courthouse and Indiana State University, downtown can be the legal, government, cultural, education and shopping center of Terre Haute, according to Pickett.

The area should have "something that attracts people of all ages, for all purposes at all times of the day," Pickett said.

Proved May 1, 1981

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BUSINESSMAN HERM RASSEL

History Isn't Vital To Future Of Downtown

City Planning (T.H.)

MAY 5 1981

Historical significance is not important to the vitality of downtown Terre Haute, Herm Russel believes.

"Something has to be done" about the situation downtown, stated Russel, who chairs the Downtown Merchant's Association. There are too few business downtown, and Russel does not think "you can attract new business with old buildings."

He does not see how making the downtown into an historic district "could help business any. What's it going to bring?" he asked.

Preservation of buildings just because they are of historical significance is not going to help the downtown if those buildings remain empty, Russel noted.

"I don't know what good it (the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places) is except to preserve architecture," Russel said. "How is that going to help business?"

Russel believes the survey portion of the nomination, which took eight or nine months to complete, might have been a waste of time.

Not all the buildings downtown should be leveled, Russel said. "I'm not all for tearing it down just to be tearing it down." However, "if tearing (buildings) down will bring more business downtown, that's what we need," he added.

The downtown area needs a motel or hotel, more parking and "some new buildings for more stores," he said.

The construction of a mall, which has been planned for that area between Cherry, Ohio, Fifth and Seventh, is "bound to help," Russel said.

The problem with the mall, though, is what will happen to the downtown business while their buildings are torn down and the mall is built. He hopes steps will be taken so downtown business owners will have someplace to go during the mall's construction.

Currently, the developers of the mall, David Hocker & Associates, are working on the final project design and site plan, according to Charles Burton, vice president. The market study for the project has been completed, he added.

The rough draft of the city's Urban Development Action Grant Program application, which will seek federal assistance for mall construction, has been completed, according to Marc Eliot, director of the Redevelopment Department.

"It's just a matter of plugging in the numbers," he said. The city is awaiting the architect's figures on the costs of the project.

Downtown report by F. I. GOLDHABER
Star Staff Writer

City Planning Sidewalk work should begin

Community Affairs File

Work on some city sidewalks, curbs and sewer inlets should begin this summer, according to discussion at the regular meeting of the Terre Haute Redevelopment Commission in City Hall today.

The commission approved a contract in the amount of \$31,842.75 to J. A. Sears Inc., for construction of community-wide site improvements, which is to include sidewalk and curb work at several South Seventh Street locations.

Community Affairs File

The commission also approved a contract in the amount of \$29,804 to Major and Sons Inc., for the construction of new stairs and a handicapped ramp at City Hall.

The handicapped ramp is necessary to comply with criteria for participation in a HUD Community Development Block Grant program, which requires that the building where the community development program is administered be accessible to the handicapped.

MAY 20 1981

An administrative budget for June 1, 1981, through May 31, 1982, totaling \$266,000, which is to include \$260,000 CDBG funds and \$6,000 Urban Development Action Grant funds, was approved.

The meeting was in progress as of press time.

Discussion also included review of preliminary designs for the Fairbanks Park project.

Although one of three designs had been selected, no further action had been taken as press time.

Vigo County Public Library

Community Affairs File

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Community Affairs File

City Planning - T.H.

Downtown project in 'highly favorable situation'

By PATRICIA KRAPESH
Tribune Staff Writer

Evidently, "no news" has been "good news" in the case of the downtown redevelopment.

"The minute that I or anybody else utters a timetable, it's almost a guarantee that it won't get hit," Charles Burton, director of the urban development division of David Hocker & Associates, told local news reporters today.

"We're at the very detailed, unexciting phase of our work," he said.

Burton and colleagues, however, hope to "within the next few weeks have the bulk of the work completed.

"I think we've reached a point where we all have to make some decisions," he commented.

Will the project, which includes the proposed Wabash Centre, a downtown shopping mall, become a reality?

"It's a highly favorable situation," Burton said. "We're bettin' on it... I can't think of any major stumbling blocks that can't be overcome with cooperation."

Location has continued to be a primary source of speculation. Burton spoke of the "super block." He said, "The Sixth to Seventh block is the only location."

The Kentucky-based developer also said there will be three

anchor tenants, and the possibility exists there will be a fourth.

Some discussion centered on the inclusion of a hotel in the project. "I think it makes good sense to try to get the hotel in the first phase (of the project)," Burton said.

Rehabilitation of the now vacant Terre Haute House building was referred to as an "option" by Burton.

Burton and Dr. William Qualls of G.R.W. Engineering Inc. addressed the Terre Haute Redevelopment Commission early today.

Later in the morning, Mayor Pete Chalos, Marc Elliott, redevelopment department director,

and Burton conducted a news conference.

At the morning session with the commission, Burton said, "The nuts and bolts type of work is what's going on."

More specifically, the planners have been working to finalize the site plan, preparing preliminary specifications to be submitted to contractors and seeking the "financial talent" to put the project together, according to Burton.

"As we bring in each element to the development process, we then have to increase our negotiations back and forth," he told the commission.

He estimated "about 45 days"

will pass before an announcement of the finalized site plan will be forthcoming.

The finalization of the site plan is "very complicated" in Burton's words. "We have to acquire as little property as possible," he added.

Another possibility being explored is to approach the project as one-phase, rather than two. Burton said "some negotiations" are currently being conducted to achieve that end.

"The numbers is what the bottom line is," he said, citing the extreme expense of new construction.

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Downtown Developers Bring Plans To Date At Meeting

Star
7-2-81

City Planning (T11)

Developers for the downtown redevelopment project say a hotel may be included in phase one of the project. Developers refused to commit themselves to a timetable for the project saying, "the minute a timetable is announced it's almost a guarantee it won't be met."

The Department of Redevelopment met Wednesday with downtown project developers David Hocker & Associates to discuss the present status of the downtown project.

The Director for redevelopment for the project says the process of lease negotiation has begun. "They are concentrating on office, retail, and possibly a hotel, business for the project," explained Redevelopment Department Director, Marc Elliot.

The possibility of renovating the Terre Haute House was discussed according to Elliot. "We are not looking for a chain hotel to build downtown, the builders are talking to independent contractors right now," Elliot said.

The next step for the the city will be to hire a bond council. "We will be looking into Urban Development Grants," said a Department of Re-

development Administrator, Mike Barnes.

A recent survey done by the Downtown Business Association showed 60 percent of the downtown business people support the project.

Elliot says the city will try to get as much money for the project as possible and doesn't see Regan spending cuts getting in the way. "Reagan seems to be for any prject that will increase private sector jobs, and that is what this project will do," he said.

He said that although the city lost population according to the the 1980 census the business base of the community grew.

"We want to build here before they build another mall on an interstate exit. We don't want to try and compete with local shopping plazas. We are interested in providing services that are not available," Elliot said.

He said the developers are looking for a different market, one that is presently untapped in the area.

Meanwhile planners have been working to finalize a site plan. Although Burton would not announce a specific timetable he did say he would announce the site plane within the next 45 days.

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Community Affairs File

the 'old'

Community Affairs File

City Planning (T.H.)

Community Affairs File

Downtown update: Saving

T AUG 1 4 1981 By PATRICIA KRAPESH
Tribune Staff Writer

T AUG 1 4 1981

With a shared primary goal of downtown revitalization, two different groups have focused their attention on separate — but related — areas of concern.

Proposed construction of an aesthetically-pleasing "new" downtown mall referred to as the Wabash Centre has been a primary concern of some city officials and the Kentucky development firm of David Hocker and Associates.

Behind the scenes, another group's task has been to review the merits of preserving "old" structures with historical value. Their official objective has been to review a survey for the nomination of buildings in the downtown Terre Haute area to the National Register of Historic Places.

This group, which includes six persons appointed last November by Mayor Pete Chalos to function as an advisory council to him, met this week.

With four advisory council members present at a "closed" meeting Wednesday, the group "passed a motion, unanimously, to advise the mayor about the preparation of his urban renewal plan and how preservation concerns should be a part of that plan," said William Pickett, the group's chairman.

The nature of that "recommendation" has not been released.

While voting results on structures were released after each of the group's first two meetings, Pickett said in January, "Members of the committee felt we should finish all our deliberations on buildings in the downtown area before we make our evaluations public."

Research in the meantime, indicates that historic preservation has a reputation for being a bit of a "bugaboo" when new development efforts are in the works. Citizens in other areas have been known to embrace the cause of preserving historical buildings and stop new development as a result.

While the United States Code and other statutes dealing with historic preservation are lengthy and filled with technicalities, the issue seems to

This special update on the downtown project also includes a look at the progress on the development of a downtown mall; story, Page 5.

revolve around a building's eligibility for inclusion on the historical register.

Where federal funds, including UDAG (Urban Development Action Grant funds) are involved, required environmental impact studies include review of adverse impact on the historic integrity of a building site or object.

According to earlier reports, benefits of inclusion in the national register include property owner eligibility for up to 50 per cent matching funds for the cost of the building's rehabilitation and, also, certain tax-break incentives.

Following an inventory last spring of more than 300 structures in the downtown area, over 100 buildings were categorized historically "outstanding and notable" in a report prepared by William Selm for Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc. (THCI).

According to information released last autumn, the mayor's advisory council established three categories of recommendation including a number one listing: "buildings to be saved, if at all possible, or incorporated into the downtown design."

Later reports indicated that the architects commissioned to design the downtown project were optimistic and "open" to possibilities for incorporating some historical structures into proposed plans for the downtown.

"The mayor indicated to us that he hopes that preservation will occur but that it won't interfere with downtown redevelopment. There is agreement between the mayor and the committee to that effect," Pickett said in December.

While early indications were that the mayor's advisory council had a need

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to complete their task by the first of the year, their efforts, too, have continued past the earlier projected timetable. But the end is apparently in sight.

A meeting between the mayor and the advisory council to discuss the group's recommendation is expected to occur within the next week and a half, according to Mark Blade, assistant director of the redevelopment department and ex-officio member of the advisory council.

No announcement in relation to the council's recommendation is expected until after that meeting, Blade told The TRIBUNE Thursday.

He said that after the meeting "that will formally end their (the advisory council's) work — unless he (the mayor) comes up with a new scope for them to do something additional." Of the latter, however, Blade noted, "I can't foresee that at this time."

Meanwhile the crucial UDAG application, without which Hocker representative Chuck Burton has said the project "probably wouldn't happen," is in a holding pattern.

"Our timeframe for the UDAG submission cannot occur until certain events are completed by Hocker," Blade explained. Certain events include definition of the site plan, lease negotiations and determination of what financing mechanism will be used.

Early timetables for the UDAG application paralleled the projected submission of the list of structures to be nominated to the historical register and it was indicated that simultaneous submission might occur.

In its early proceedings the advisory council attached a number one rating, "should be saved if possible" to several buildings in the downtown including the Terre Haute First National Bank building, Deming Center, the Federal Building and the First Congregational Church.

The final decision on buildings to be nominated will be made by the redevelopment department and the mayor, according to earlier reports.

Advisory council members are Liz Davis, Louis Glascock, Anna Chalos-McAleese, Don Smith, Shelton Hannig and Pickett.

No magic wa

T AUG 1 4 1981 By PATRICIA KRAPESH
Tribune Staff Writer

While there's no magic wand to be waved to produce instant downtown revitalization, rumor has it that mortals can achieve the same end — minus the wand.

The difference between mortal power and magic, however, is that mortals need time — as much as a year or more to achieve some tasks.

A spokeswoman for the Kentucky firm whose task is to make the proposed downtown Wabash Centre mall a reality told The TRIBUNE Thursday, "I think by the first part of September, you're going to know a whole lot more."

While the developer originally projected that anchor tenants would hopefully be announced as early as the start of this year, the date has periodically been pushed back and David Hocker and Associates representative Chuck Burton ceased making predictions.

"The minute that I or anybody else utters a timetable, it's almost a guarantee that it won't get hit," Burton said on July 1.

"When you're only a year into a project that sounds like a long time to the average person," Edie Crane, director of communications for Hocker and Associates, said, but "these projects don't happen overnight."

While local citizens may be saying, "'Oh, it's *already* been a year' — from our standpoint, we're saying, 'Oh, it's *only* been a year,'" she explained.

On the subject of negotiations with prospective anchor tenants, Ms. Crane said a meeting with Don Smith of the Terre Haute First Natinal Bank was to

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Community Affairs File

Planning (T.H.)

occur in July, but "redesign was necessary" and the meeting was postponed. The meeting should occur in September, instead, Ms. Crane said. She indicated that the redesign had to do with plans for parking for the proposed mall.

Meanwhile, a contractual agreement between the developer and the city is due to expire Aug. 29, according to Marc Elliott, director of the Terre Haute Department of Redevelopment. But he contends the significance of that expiration is minimal.

"I think the significance (of the contract expiration) is more among the members of the press than it is among the governmental community," Elliott said Thursday.

The contract "agreement really has more benefit to the developer than it does to the city," Elliott explained. "The developer asked for the agreement, not the city."

Described as providing greater protection for the developer than the city, Elliott noted that the Hocker company has paid for architects and engineers among other things. The contract protects him from another developer coming in and taking advantage of the work already completed, Elliott said.

"Definitely we will be renewing it (the contract)," Ms. Crane said Thursday.

She added, "I don't think the expiration of the contract with the city is anything that people should be concerned about."

Related story can be found on Page 1.

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Optimism Surrounds *City Planning (T.H.)* Downtown Project

S AUG 19 1981

By GERALD P. GRIMES
Star Staff Writer

There are indications that the Terre Haute downtown redevelopment project might be moving closer toward becoming a reality.

City officials seem to be somewhat more optimistic about the project than in the past, but are cautious about discussing details.

"I can't make any comments on it at this time," Mayor Pete Chalos said. He explained that the city didn't want to jeopardize the current negotiations between Hocker representatives and possible tenants.

"We're going to let the developer and the businesses involved make any statements to the media," Chalos said.

In an interview Monday with The Star, Marc Elliott, director of the city's redevelopment department, said an announcement about the project would be made soon. He expressed concerns similar to those of Chalos about harming the progress of negotiations, and therefore declined to go into detail.

"I'm pretty optimistic," Elliott said.

Edie Crane, director of communications at Hocker, says she "sees no reason" why a downtown redevelopment plan can't be devised.

"We still feel it can go," Crane

said. "There's really no doubt about it at this stage."

She confirmed that an announcement about the project would be made in the near future.

"Probably in early September, but I can't say for sure exactly what will be included in that," Crane said.

The Hocker firm apparently isn't concerned that the contract with the city to develop a downtown plan expires near the end of August.

"We will have to get in touch with the city about that but as far as we know there's really no problem."

Crane said the news media and the public seem to be overly anxious for a plan to be announced.

"Really, a year is not a long time at all for a project like this," Crane added. "The only ones who seemed to be concerned about the time at this point are members of the media," she said.

"In a project like this, a year is not a long time and so much of the work has to be done behind closed doors. The public isn't hearing anything about the project but that doesn't mean nothing's happened. A lot has happened lately."

She declined to mention when Hocker's work on the project might be completed.

"It's hard to say because it depends on how things fall into place."

Vigo County Public Library

DO NOT CIRCULATE

Community Affairs File

S AUG 20 1981 G AUG 20 1981

Behind Closed Doors?

City Planning (T.H.)

It appears now, that after several years, some news about downtown development might be forthcoming within the next month, but the attitude of some people involved, particularly one woman with the development company, is a bit puzzling.

Mayor Pete Chalos said Tuesday he could not comment on prospective negotiations with anchor tenants for a downtown shopping district, indicating publicity might damage what is believed to be a delicate stage of negotiations. "We're going to let the developer and the businesses involved make any statements to the media," Chalos was quoted as saying.

Enter Edie Crane, director of communications for Hocker and Associates, project developer for the downtown area. Ms. Crane responded to a Star reporter's questions in a pleasant, bureaucratic sense, but it was the response which raises an eyebrow.

Ms. Crane said the news media in Terre Haute and the public are over anxious for a plan to be developed and that a year is not an uncommon length of time to wait for a development project. Well, what Ms. Crane did not stop to think about is that the media in Terre Haute are very concerned with the situation and are urging progress. Also, just because Hocker and Associates has been involved only for a year doesn't mean that a downtown renovation project is only a year old. How long has it been Terre Haute? Five years? Ten years? Twenty years?

Downtown has been stagnant with buildings disappearing in every block. We need some help. The Chalos administration looked toward the Owensboro, Ky., development company for that assistance.

Ms. Crane also said "... so much of the work has to be done behind closed doors. The public isn't hearing anything about the project but that doesn't mean nothing's happened. A lot has happened lately."

If a lot has happened lately, then we think the citizens of Terre Haute have a right to know it and we are reasonably sure most of the other news media in Terre Haute feel the same way. We all try to be first with the news, but at the same time we also are concerned with providing information to the public — information which effects people's lives daily.

We will continue to have this attitude and we will call sources when news breaks or when we think citizens have a right to know certain information. A project as critical to the lifeblood of a city as a downtown renovation project must be kept before the public. And we vow to do so.

Of course we're interested, Ms. Crane. If we were not, would your company have been hired in the first place? We've waited a long time for downtown development, not just the year Hocker and Associates has been involved. We're anxious to see progress.

Mayor takes look at options for development of downtown

T AUG 24 1981

By PATRICIA KRAPESH
Tribune Staff Writer

Downtown Update

If the downtown revitalization plans, including commitments for the Wabash Centre mall, become a "reality," Mayor Pete Chalos recently said, "then I think there would be several firms interested in making the Terre Haute House a hotel."

In the event the projected downtown scenario would not play out, the mayor said, "Then we'd be interested in seeing it (the Terre Haute House) become a senior citizens' center — but at the right cost."

The mayor's discussion of the proposed downtown project occurred during a recent news conference.

Saying that he understood the "time element" required by potential investors to commit themselves to the project, the mayor explained, investors are looking at a "\$30 million investment," which will be a "two to three generation" monetary commitment.

"I don't think it's fair to ask those people to 'do it real quick' so we can see the results," he said. "They have to be convinced it's good not only for Terre Haute, but it's good for them."

However, the mayor also indicated, "It (the project) will go one way or another very shortly."

"The time is here for that kind of investment and if it does happen — and with other things that are happening in

Terre Haute — Terre Haute will really blossom. I think the time is here," he commented.

Noting that "well over a \$100 million of investments within the immediate area of Terre Haute" by industrial concerns had occurred within the "past few days," Chalos said also that five "EDC (Economic Development Commission) bonds were being sold in a succession of two months.

"We do see the indication that there are some folks that think now is the best time to jump in there and swim," he continued.

Not "one cent of tax funds" has been paid to the downtown developer David Hocker and Associates, according to Chalos.

"We're not dealing with a city project, we're dealing with a developing firm who is working with local and out-of-town investors to do an investment in Terre Haute. At the time that decision is made to do the investment, then we (the city) become involved and it becomes a public matter," he said.

The current city administration's goal was to "set the stage for a developer to be able to come in using his own resources — because when you use your own, you've got a stake in it, you want to make it go — and

talk with potential investors and with us about plans to see if we can really go in downtown Terre Haute. And, that we've done," the mayor said.

On another subject — historic preservation — Chalos said he plans to soon meet with his advisory council to discuss their final report.

Saying that the council has "done a good job," Chalos added, "I feel like after it's through, we will have a report that we can all live with.

"I don't think there are hundreds of buildings worthy of saving in Terre Haute," he commented, but also said, "I don't think on the other end there is nothing.

"I think we have to look at all of them in light of the financial impact... and I think this committee has done that," he concluded.

The duties of the mayor's advisory council, appointed in November last year, have included review of more than 300 potentially historic buildings in the downtown area.

The result of their review has resulted in a recommendation to the mayor concerning buildings eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Vigo County Public Library

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Community Affairs File

S OCT 6 1991
City Planning (111)

Downtown Development Gets Most Attention At Hearing

Redevelopment of the downtown area and the "911" communications system were discussed during Monday's public hearing on future development of Terre Haute. Approximately 10 residents voiced their opinions during the hour-long hearing.

The suggestions will be incorporated into an updated version of the city's comprehensive plan, according to Gary Brett, Area Planning Department director.

Both Patricia Jenkins and David Kauffman spoke on the necessity of a good emergency communication system. "'911' is so easy to find in the dark or during an emergency," Kauffman said. "It's better than dialing some seven-digit numbers."

Jenkins, who identified herself as a nurse, said, "We need a good communications system. If we insist on it, we can get it. We need to cut out the politics and get in on the '911.'" "

Downtown redevelopment was also a main concern of the audience. "I saw the area declined in the past ten

years, we should protect small business in this community," one said. "In the next five and 10 years, we've got to do something for sure.

"Redevelopment has to be done within five years, or else it's gone," he continued.

Evelyn Manson, 1219 N. 6th St., said that she would like to see a mall built in the downtown area.

"I hate to see the downtown go," Dale Findley said. "We need to work on those things that seem to be a problem to us and take advantage of it."

Other suggestions voiced during the public hearing included an ordinance for the mandatory installation of smoke detectors in all rental property, and hotel and motel rooms; the construction of an elevated highway that would join U.S. 63 with U.S. 41 to improve traffic flow, and an ordinance mandating developers to provide recreation space for residents.

Community Affairs File

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City Planning (?)

downtown

Community Affairs File

T OCT 6 1991

Citizens want revitalized

By PATRICIA KRAPESH
Tribune Staff Writer

Citizens called for a revitalized downtown, institution of the "911" emergency phone number, and a positive attitude about the future of Terre Haute during a public hearing Monday in the City Hall Courtroom.

Fewer than 10 people out of about 60 who attended the hour-long hearing offered suggestions for citywide improvements to be incorporated into the update of Terre Haute's comprehensive plan.

Both Patricia Jenkins, who identified herself as having been an emergency department nurse for over 20 years, and Dave Kaufman asserted that the "911" emergency

phone number system to service both city and county residents should be implemented locally.

"I'm afraid that here in Terre Haute we have a conflict of interest. Everybody's protecting their own turf. I think what we need to do — that you as citizens need to do — is insist that our communications system be updated so that when you need emergency service that you will get it," Ms. Jenkins stated.

While she complimented the fire department for its efforts she said the system would be helpful to it and the community.

Nick Anderson, owner and operator of Nick's Salon of Styles, said he was in favor of revitalizing and "cleaning

up" the downtown and other neighborhoods.

"We need to protect small business.... Small businesses comprise the vast majority of our gross national product," he said.

Referring to the proposed downtown project by developer David Hocker and Associates, Anderson said he would like to invest in the downtown and referred to a past meeting between Hocker representatives and downtown merchants.

"They (Hocker representatives) said we could not, as small businessmen, buy 'x' amount of square feet. Anchor tenants, of course, can do that. Say, two or three anchor stores could buy their space — if five

or six small businesses wanted to get involved and buy space we couldn't do it," he said.

Anderson also called for better cooperation between the city and Indiana State University. The two "should work together for the good of both," he said.

Dale Findley of the Farrington's Grove neighborhood association noted that an "attitude problem" exists and recommended, "Let's sell Terre Haute."

He remarked, "City officials can't do it all themselves."

Findley suggested that the community capitalize on its natural resources such as the Wabash River and take advantage of the "crossroads"

location of Terre Haute to attract new people to the city.

One woman said that in days past the now vacant Terre Haute House was an object of pride for city residents. "We need things brought about that we can have a good hotel or motel in the downtown of our city," she said.

Another citizen suggested a mandate for all city hotels, rooming houses and rental properties to require smoke alarms.

A savings for the city and county parks would be the result if developers were required to allow ample recreation space for their projects before they were approved, according to another resident.

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Project

Community Affairs File

given

desired

Community Affairs File

deadline

By PATRICIA KRAPESH
Tribune Staff Writer

A preferred Nov. 10 deadline on commitments for the proposed downtown Terre Haute project was confirmed today by a David Hocker and Associates spokeswoman.

However, comment was declined on what happens if the "hoped for" commitments are not made by Nov. 10.

Chuck Burton, Hocker representative, who has made several visits to Terre Haute over the past year in connection with proposed plans for a \$50 million downtown shopping mall, was not available for comment.

But, Edie Crane, director of communications for the Owensboro, Ky., development firm, confirmed today that a letter from David Hocker to Don Smith, president of the Terre Haute First National Bank, discussed the "hoped for" commitment date.

A bulk of the land affected by the proposed downtown project is owned by the bank.

"Yes, we did send a letter reiterating the developer process," Ms. Crane said. "We are hoping that we will receive commitments by Nov. 10."

Ms. Crane declined to clarify whether Terre Haute First National Bank was the only outstanding commitment. According to earlier reports, letters of intent from some firms have been received by Hocker.

Smith was not available for comment as of The TRIBUNE's deadline.

The downtown project has been on the drawing board for months, with the Hocker firm working on obtaining commitments from private businesses and firms.

Officials have been cautious about discussing the specifics of the negotiations with the private firms, citing the delicacy of some of the talks.

Terre Haute Mayor Pete Chalos was unavailable this morning.

All efforts on the downtown project have centered on the desire not to let the area "die" from a business standpoint.



HIGH CLIMBER — Steve Diedam of Goodland carefully works his way around the steeple of St. Peter and Paul's Church, suspended by a few strands of rope. The steeple was struck by lightning this summer, and Diedam and his two brothers were resurfacing the 110-foot structure, complete with lightning rod.

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Community Affairs File

Developer Cites Lack Of Investors In City

S NOV 6 1981

By GERALD P. GRIMES
Star Staff Writer

(c) 1981, Terre Haute Star

Plans for a \$50 million multi-level shopping mall and a bank/office tower proposed by David Hocker and Associates of Owensboro, Ky. may be in jeopardy because of an apparent lack of commitment from local investors.

The developer has been meeting with representatives from the Terre Haute First National Bank and other local citizens for more than a year to arrive at an agreement on a downtown project.

Because of an apparent extended delay in securing the full commitments desired, David Hocker is debating the value of spending more time or money developing a project in Terre Haute.

In a letter to First National Bank President Don Smith, Hocker outlined his intentions to drop the project unless commitments are made before Nov. 10.

Smith told The Star he received the letter Tuesday, and had to leave on a business trip before having a chance to "fully digest it."

"In the first three pages he sort of sounded like he was giving all of us an adios," Smith said. "Then around the last page he sounded a little more like things could be worked out; he talked about getting together and talking about things," he added.

Hocker's assistant, Charles Burton, who has represented the firm in the negotiations with local merchants and investors during the past year, refused to comment on the situation. He was contacted by The Star via telephone Thursday night at his Owensboro residence. When asked directly if he would confirm such a letter existed, Burton would only reply that he would prefer being contacted at his office.

David Hocker was not available to comment Thursday.

Mayor Pete Chalos told The Star he had received a copy of Hocker's letter to Smith. He was cautious about commenting on the situation for fear of complicating any negotiations which may still occur.

"I just hope everything works out

for the good of both the merchants and the developer, whatever happens," Chalos said. "I can't really give you any quotes or comments except to say that I received a copy of the letter."

Hocker was selected as the city's "developer of record" in late August 1980. The city administration had been trying to gain the interest of a developer for a downtown project, particularly a developer who did not want to spend more municipal dollars for additional studies.

In several interviews with The Star over the past few weeks, Mayor Pete Chalos has said he did not want the city to spend additional funds for studies, but rather institute a solution to the problem of further downtown decay.

"I decided that the last thing we are going to do is spend money for another study," Chalos said during an interview in September.

The first meetings between Hocker and the board of directors of Terre Haute First National Bank occurred during October, 1980.

The firm reportedly secured "letters of intent" from local merchants and others who wanted to be tenants in the new mall.

Negotiations progressed until late summer when the investors were asked for their commitments to the project. Apparently considering other alternatives, some investors hesitated in replying to Hocker, probably prompting the letter to Smith.

The recent developments suggest Hocker might be dropping Terre Haute from his list of sites for a large-scale mall project. The Hocker plan was considered important by city officials because it was the only downtown proposal to reach the final stages and yet remain very palatable.

"There has never been a redevelopment proposal for downtown Terre Haute that has had such potential for reversing the decline of downtown or a redevelopment proposal that has come so close to becoming a reality," Department of Redevelopment Director Elliott said in an interview some weeks ago.

Elliott also declined to comment on the letter received by Smith for reasons like those of the mayor.

Vigo County Public Library

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Community Affairs File

City's 'Challenge' On Downtown Has Lingered 25 Years

NOV 12 1981

By GERALD P. GRIMES
Star Staff Writer

(c) 1981, Terre Haute Star

"We challenge anyone to walk down Wabash Avenue from Third to Ninth Streets, taking an inventory of the ancient, dilapidated buildings; antiquated store fronts; vacant upper floors; unpainted, unwashed, unclean exterior walls; garish, dirty streets; overhanging signs and traffic jams without realizing that something needs to be done — and quickly."

Although the above quote sounds as though it might have come from today's editorial page, it is more than 20 years old. The late John Lamb, then president of the Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce, put together the committee which wrote the booklet entitled "A Challenge" published in 1959.

What you've just read was the opening paragraph of the booklet, aimed at spurring local investors and city government to get involved in solving the downtown dilemma.

Despite this and numerous other efforts which began decades ago, downtown Terre Haute has continued to deteriorate. Many local citizens involved in the Chamber's project are amazed at just how much worse off the city's hub really is than when they complained that "something needs to be done — and quickly" back then.

Although photos taken in the late 50s seem to depict a viable, inviting, seemingly bustling downtown area by today's standards the authors of "A Challenge" apparently saw the first tangible evidence of urban decay.

"Anyone who thinks that the situation in Terre Haute has not reached crisis proportions is being badly fooled," another part of the booklet cries.

"A Challenge" leveled charges that the blame can be placed on a "lack of will, initiative, cooperation and leadership."

Everyone from the downtown merchants to city government to the shoppers themselves have been blamed for the problem, which surfaced as a local concern at least 25 years ago, according to records and information available at the Vigo County Public Library.



The Downtown Dilemma

Over these decades downtown has literally been mapped, drawn, photographed, studied and surveyed by scores of committees, university groups and interested citizens trying to work on the problem.

It has been both written about and read about in stacks of newspaper articles and reports generated by the various downtown groups.

More than anything, the downtown dilemma has been TALKED about. And when it's all said and done, a lot more seems to have been SAID than DONE.

Studies of the downtown area date back to before "A Challenge" was written. The elimination of traffic congestion, brought about by heavy use of U.S. Highway 40 (Wabash Avenue) during the 50s and 60s, was a primary goal of the earliest of the studies.

Although the idea of using Cherry Street as a by-pass came about as a result of these studies and surveys, the coming of Interstate 70 completely changed the complexion of the city's traffic problems anyway.

Various downtown studies during the 70s gathered data about the problem and almost always suggested a solution. A downtown mall, with a pedestrian plaza where Wabash Avenue is, was a popular concept, as was closing Sixth Street or certain alleys to create "pedestrian access" to the area.

The Downtown Business Council and Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc. were two of the most prominent of the groups involved. Civic Improvement, headed by Rose-Hulman President John Logan led the way for the "Sixth Street Demonstration Project."

Highly criticized by Mayor Pete Chalos for its cost overruns, and touted as one of the city's worst traffic hazards by other officials, the project seems to be thought of as having done more harm than good.

The project's intent was to show downtown merchants what could be done using modern design, time and, mostly, money.

Press accounts indicate merchants along the one-block segment of Sixth Street which featured the project were sorely disappointed by its design. Some called the tree rows in the middle of the street "drunk islands."

The brick streets and trees were recommended as a "treatment" for the entire area.

The total cost of the project still hasn't been made public, although Chalos ordered an audit some time ago.

Civic Improvement was said to have sunk some \$68,000 into the project, which opened in November of 1978.

During its involvement with downtown, Civic Improvement spent some \$20,000 for a study of the area, \$10,000 of which was a federal grant.

Surprisingly, few downtown plans included the concept of a regional shopping mall downtown like the one proposed by David Hocker and Associates. In fact, the author of one of the recent downtown studies flatly opposed the concept:

"Creating a permanent mall does not seem feasible: first because of the cost, and secondly because of the compounding of traffic problems which would be created if the present traffic burden on Wabash Avenue had to be carried by the adjacent streets," Richard Dober, city planner wrote in his map-like publication "Strategy for Improvement" completed in 1977.

The Hocker firm was the first developer to come to Terre Haute seeking to solve the problem with dollars and cents.

Selected from several development companies who applied, Hocker was entered as the city's "developer of record," meaning the developer the city administration recognizes as working on the downtown front.

It wasn't long after accepting the position that Hocker representatives began talking about a new downtown on a grand scale.

The price tag of \$50 million, "downtown mall," "retail/office complex" and "Wabash Centre" (proposed name for the project) quickly became buzz words associated with Hocker.

At this point in time the downtown dilemma seems to be at a crossroads with Hocker's continued participation now very much in question.

Hocker 'Still Interested' In Downtown T.H.

City Planning (T.H.)

S NOV 10 1981

By GERALD P. GRIMES
Star Staff Writer
(c) 1981, Terre Haute Star

Don't count David Hocker out — yet.

In a telephone interview with The Star from his home Monday, developer David Hocker said his firm is still interested in downtown Terre Haute.

"I would say that we are still very interested in downtown Terre Haute. We have not dropped our efforts."

When asked if plans were in the works to do so in the near future Hocker said:

"Absolutely not."

However, those statements conflict with what Hocker said in a letter mailed to Terre Haute First National Bank President Don Smith last week.

Hocker talked of dropping the project unless word was received by Nov. 10 that the bank would participate.

Hocker refused to discuss the letter under any circumstances "because it was a private letter from me to him and I don't believe it should be discussed in the public media."

"We're still interested in Terre Haute, but don't report that as if I said it in response to anything in the letter. I don't think I should comment on the letter," Hocker explained.

Hocker's firm has been working with local investors for more than a year and a half to come up with a redevelopment proposal for Terre Haute's central business district.

Although several tentative plans were discussed over that period, the company's latest plans centered around the construction of a \$50 million multi-level shopping mall and an adjacent office tower.

The Star learned last week that the project was in jeopardy, when Smith verified receipt of the letter.

Smith said Monday he thought Hocker's letter was "his way of saying he wants out of this."

"Having talked to a number of people over the weekend, I think this (the letter) is their way of saying they want out of this whole thing," Smith said. "I mean if we would suddenly say 'yes' to the whole thing I think you'd see a lot of scurrying around on their part. I think they were just looking for a way of getting out of this and this was just one of the easiest ways," he added.

Asked for a response, Hocker refused to comment:

"I'm not going to comment on what a reporter says someone else has said. I have had no contact with Mr. Smith, and I don't see how I can comment."

Mayor Pete Chalos said his administration was observing the situation and he remains hopeful.

"Well, again, I'll just say that we want to make sure anybody that wants to improve downtown Terre Haute gets all the consideration we can give them," Chalos said. He added that the city is interested in trying to spur investment and growth by rebuilding the central business district.

"We're hopeful the project can go ahead, and we're trying to cooperate in any way we can. But, we're not going to force someone to make a decision if the price isn't right for them," the mayor also said.

He likened the city's role to that of a minister in a marriage ceremony: "We'll marry 'em when they decide they've fallen in love and are ready to make a lifelong commitment to one another, but not until," Chalos said with a slight chuckle. "We aren't going to have any shotgun weddings in Terre Haute!" he added.

Elliott would not comment on Hocker's status, and said no official comments would be forthcoming unless the developer himself would make such an announcement.

He did say his department would simply continue its efforts to get downtown revitalized if Hocker did drop the current project.

"You can certainly see in other cities that they've gone through several developers before accomplishing their projects — it's just part of the process," Elliott said.

He added that Terre Haute has been contacted by other developers who have an interest in Terre Haute.

The Hocker plan was considered important by city administration officials because on other proposal had come so close to being finalized, Elliott has said.

Letters of "intent" — more or less form letters interested parties sign for a developer of a project — had been secured from three local businesses: Meis, Schultz and reportedly Merchants National Bank.

Hocker representatives sought a fourth letter of intent from Terre Haute First National Bank, according to Bank President Don Smith.

In an interview Friday, Smith said the bank didn't sign a letter of intent because of concerns that some of its options might become less available if any type of commitment was made.

"We want to see a downtown project as much as anybody, but we have the interests and concerns of our stockholders and investors to consider as well. What good would a letter be if we didn't mean what we said?" Smith said.

Lu Meis of the Meis department store said his company didn't really view the letter as being officially binding.

"It really is more of a letter of 'interest' rather than 'intent'. That would be a better name for it," Meis said.

"There's no reason anyone really interested in being a part of a downtown project wouldn't write and sign one of the letters," he added.

Dick Schultz of Schultz and Co. verified that his firm had signed one of the letters for Hocker.

"We did say we were interested in helping to develop a course to help," Schultz said.

He also commented on the possible loss of Hocker as the project's developer.

"I'd say that unless there is someone really waiting in the wings it would not be a positive thing," Schultz said.

REFERENCE
Community Affairs File
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T NOV 10 1981 City Planning (T.H.)

Downtown plan remains uncertain

By PATRICIA KRAPESH
Tribune Staff Writer

The future of downtown Terre Haute remains an unknown as today marks a reported deadline for commitments from anchor tenants for the proposed \$50 million shopping mall.

Recent news reports has focused on business correspondence from downtown developer David Hocker & Associates to Terre Haute First National Bank president Don Smith.

Smith told The TRIBUNE today that he has not communicated with the Owensboro (Kentucky) firm since receipt of the letter with the Nov. 10 deadline for commitment from the bank.

"We just have a wait-and-see situation," Smith said, and clarified that he is not the sole decision-maker, that the bank's action will be a board decision.

According to reports, David Hocker has not had additional contact with Smith since the mailing of the letter seeking a commitment from the bank. Hocker also reportedly has

indicated that his firm's interest in the Terre Haute project still exists.

Smith said the bank board is "very much interested" in the revitalization of the downtown. "We just can't act by Nov. 10," he explained.

"Something of this type takes planning and time," he said.

He noted the cost factor of involvement in the project, explaining that "the economy has reared its ugly head" and indicated that the timing of the project over the past year has been awkward because of the economic situation.

"We (the bank) have more invested than anybody else," Smith explained. "Everybody wants to see a fantastic downtown and we do too."

The bank needs new facilities, Smith said, "And, we would like to do it in the downtown here."

As the major land owner in the area affected by the proposed downtown project, the Terre Haute First National Bank has been referred to as a crucial component of the planned multi-level mall.

"We bought the ground (in the downtown area) with one thing in mind... to build a bank building," Smith explained.

The bank was in the process of discussions with developers when the Hocker firm's plans were announced. Smith indicates that the bank then ended their separate deliberations in order to be supportive of the effort under way for major downtown revitalization.

Smith did express a feeling that it "was a little unnecessary" to "single" the bank out in connection with the uncertain status of the downtown project.

And, the bank president also said he does not favor the airing of business laundry in public.

Smith, and Hocker according to reports, indicated that negotiating the downtown issue through the media will not provide a solution.

But, Smith, also said, he understands the public's interest and concern about the future of the Terre Haute's downtown business district.

City Planning (TH)

Downtown Ignites Comment

TO THE EDITOR: S NOV 18 1981

With regard to your recent front-page article entitled "City's Challenge On Downtown Has Lingered 25 Years" (Nov. 12), I believe that your reference to the Terre Haute Civic Improvement, Inc.'s contribution to downtown development is grossly unfair.

Although it is true that we were responsible for the design of the much-criticized Sixth Street Demonstration Project, (which incidentally was carried out as a City of Terre Haute project while Duane Sorenson was director of THCI during the tenure of former Mayor Brighton) this was only a small part of our activities.

As a result of consultations with nationally recognized downtown developers and through public meetings, a viable program for downtown development was proposed making use of remodeled existing structures wherever possible and keeping demolition to a minimum.

In cooperation with the Indiana State University Foundation the abandoned property around and including the old Root Store was acquired, demolished, and sold to the Terre Haute First National Bank for a proposed new banking facility.

A comprehensive study on the architectural significance of the downtown area was completed and plans made to incorporate this wherever possible into downtown redevelopment. Our Parking Commission, recognizing the vital importance of additional parking in the downtown area, met frequently and made proposals for at least a partial solution to this problem.

The use of a "professional developer" appeared to be a logical further step in the renewal of the downtown area, but it is understandable that with high interest rates and growing regional malls that a downtown mall does not appear to be an attractive investment at the present time. However, there is a great deal of vitality in the downtown area and a slower, but substantial growth along the lines originally proposed by our organization is still a very definite possibility.

JOHN A. LOGAN

Executive Director

Terre Haute Civic Improvement, Inc.

Vigo County Public Library

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Community Affairs File

Downtown Can Still Survive

By GERALD P. GRIMES
Star Staff Writer

Some Saturday, take a drive in Terre Haute. Venture down Wabash Avenue, notice anything missing?

There used to be buildings on those empty lots at 7th and Wabash, 6th and Wabash and in the middle of the block between 7th and 8th on Wabash.

Take a long, hard look at the Terre Haute House. Once a landmark, the pride and joy of the Queen City of the Wabash, the old hotel now stands empty, dark and barren. An upper story window is broken out and a weather-stained curtain flaps in the frigid breeze.

The Terre Haute House used to be the center of activity in town. But now, the only signs of life even near the building are bus passengers huddled in the cold on the hotel's west side and pigeons fluttering about the rooftop keeping the bus passengers on their toes.

Drive into some of the city's neighborhoods. Much of the housing in this community is considered sub-standard, with more than 60 percent of the homes built prior to 1940.

Small, garrish houses are huddled together and in many neighborhoods condemned vacant houses stand waiting for demolition. In other areas, the wrecking crews have come and gone, leaving only empty lots behind.

This community was once the cultural, retail and financial center for the agriculturally rich Wabash Valley. Fine architecture and a broad range of merchants made the downtown area attractive. It was, so they tell me, the kind of place people liked to visit.

The neighborhoods, with their neat

weatherboard houses and homey atmosphere were good places live and to raise children. Terre Haute was great in years past leaving many fond memories. It can be great again.

Anyone who truly loves this community for what it is can look beyond

housing market in the city, and increase demand for clean, affordable houses.

If economists are correct, an upswing in the economy could come as soon as the second quarter. This will hopefully enhance the efforts of the



Staff Stuff

the current problems and see the real Terre Haute. The city has enough potential to regain its stride and stake a claim in a new era of prosperity.

Mayor Pete Chalos and his Department of Redevelopment staff have been instrumental in getting an effort to make Terre Haute great again. So have groups like the Chamber of Commerce and GROW Terre Haute.

To casual observers or passersby, Terre Haute looks as though it is a dying town. But to anyone informed enough to know about the mounting enthusiasm, cooperation and pooled efforts of those involved will say its only a matter of time before noticeable improvements are made.

The first thing on the minds of redevelopment staffers and the mayor seems to be expanding the city's industrial base. It is obvious with new jobs and the "multiplying effect" new industries would do much to strengthen the local economy. More jobs would stimulate the sagging

city administration and other groups in bringing in new industry.

The proposed \$50 million downtown redevelopment project is closer to becoming reality than at another time in the past, even with recent setbacks taken into consideration. It remains to be seen whether or not the David Hocker firm of Owensboro will be involved or not, but news that other developers are waiting in the wings with new plans casts the light of hope on the project.

With so much land already cleared, and an eager city administration ready to help the project developers and investors in any possible way, it seems here, too, progress in this area is only a matter of time.

So when you're driving through Terre Haute, remember the city's current condition need only be temporary. With cooperation, some hard work and dependable private investment, Terre Haute can again be one of Indiana's most progressive cities.

Saga Of Revitalization Effort

MAR 2 1982

City 'Free' To Seek New Downtown Developer

By GERALD P. GRIMES
Star Staff Writer

David Hocker and Co. has apparently run out of gas in its attempts to sell a large-scale downtown revitalization project, and city administration officials say Terre Haute will have to find another ride.

Mayor Pete Chalos and others in City Hall aren't giving the names of developers who are interested in taking the wheel from Hocker, but it is apparent talks are underway with some of the most prestigious names in the business.

A letter has been mailed to

Hocker explaining Terre Haute "feels free" to accept input from other developers, Chalos said.

Talks between local businessmen and Hocker representatives lasted for more than a year. Still, the Owensboro, Ky. firm was unable to interest Terre Haute First National Bank and other local investors in a large-scale downtown project.

Hocker had proposed an ambitious \$50 million project featuring a large shopping center and a 10-story office tower. Plans also included restoring the Terre Haute House to serve again as a full-service hotel.

Initial commitments were obtained from Meis and Schultz department stores and other possible tenants. But Hocker spokesman Chuck Burton said local investors were never completely satisfied with any of more than a half-dozen plans his company proposed.

"Unless the pieces somehow fall into place real soon," said Burton, "there's not much else we can do. We just don't know what else we could have done."

Although Hocker's involvement in Terre Haute seems to be dying, the incentive for revitalizing downtown is very much alive, Burton

claims.

Hocker spent more than \$90,000 studying Terre Haute, Burton said. The proposed shopping mall has a good chance of being successful, since market studies show a strong need for more retailers in the city.

The studies, conducted by Hocker's staff, also concluded the city could support a full-service hotel in the downtown area. But the outlook for new office space was not quite as bright, Burton said.

"We found that the market for more office space in Terre Haute wasn't a real boom market. You'd have to approach it very careful-

ly," Burton said.

About 60 to 70 percent of an office tower constructed downtown would have to be spoken for by potential tenants to make the effort profitable, Burton said.

The ground already plowed by Hocker could benefit another developer interested in Terre Haute, Mayor Chalos said Monday.

"I'm sure whatever has been done will be a benefit to the new developer," Chalos said.

While Hocker is obviously not likely to turn over its market studies to a competitor, general information, like the climate for an-

other shopping center, will no doubt aid the next developer who comes up to bat, Chalos contends.

But even the most impressive of market studies won't help get a downtown project built if interest rates continue to soar, and Chalos said that rub is his major concern.

As long as double-digit lending rates are the norm, Chalos predicts local investors will have a grim outlook on a downtown project.

In the interim, Chalos is pushing for revitalization on a much smaller scale. A series of workshops for property owners on how to get tax breaks,

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Firm says *City Planning (H.H.)* downtown *Downtown Improvement* needs more T MAR 2 1982 commitment

By SUE LOUGHLIN
Tribune Staff Writer

Officials with David Hocker and Co. cite a lack of commitment from portions of the downtown business district as the reason they have been phased out of downtown revitalization efforts.

"It takes more than the desire of a willing developer and a city to put something like that together," Chuck Burton, a spokesperson for Hocker, said.

While acknowledging a total commitment from the city administration, Burton said that similar backing was missing from some figures involved in the project itself.

In particular, Burton said that plans for an office building and hotel got no response from those whose backing was essential to their development.

He said that Terre Haute is not a speculative town and that other potential developers would probably encounter similar problems.

Though both Mayor Pete Chalos and Terre Haute First National Bank President Don Smith said today that they no longer consider Hocker and Co. a primary candidate in revitalization efforts, Burton said his company is still open to suggestions.

"We're still open to something," Burton said, "but we're only as good as the horses in front of us."

Chalos said today that the city has already begun talking to another developer in connection with a revitalization project for the downtown.

In addition, a letter has been sent to Hocker saying that Terre Haute "feels free" to accept input from other developers.

Talks with the particular developer are still in the preliminary stages, Chalos said, with future plans depending on the mood of local investors.

REFERENCE
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Vigo County Public Library

Community Affairs File

T MAR 16 1982

Community Affairs File

Community Affairs File

Downtown: What lies ahead for it?

By SUE LOUGHLIN
Tribune Staff Writer

The future of the downtown was the topic of discussion at this week's meeting of the Committee for Area Progress, as civic leaders tossed around various ideas on what impetus is needed to get the downtown "back on its feet."

Marc Elliott, director of the city's department of redevelopment, was the featured speaker.

Elliott said that with Hocker and Associates out of the picture, the city is now looking for new developers interested in another project. But current high interest rates and an overall depressed economic climate are going to make the task a difficult one for the present, he said.

"We are currently exploring with other developers the possibility of working with the city of Terre Haute," he said, but indicated that no specific firm has shown an interest in working with the city at this time.

Problems of the past may present difficulties in getting new developers involved in a downtown project, Elliott contends.

"I think it's going to take a harder selling job to interest another developer in the downtown because of the efforts the David Hocker company went through that were not fruitful," he said. "I think a developer would take a good hard look at whether or not he's interested in trying to go through the same hurdles that other developers have not been successful in clearing."

City Planning (T.H.)
Committee for Area Progress
Elliott added the city should continue its efforts to interest a new developer, but contended that any future plans will be dependent on the downtown business community. "The key to whatever we do in the downtown project... will be dependent upon what the local business community desires for itself," he said. "The city can provide assistance to the local business community, but we will not be in a position to do it for them."

Downtown businesses still indicate a desire for improvement, he said, and the city will provide whatever aid it can.

In discussing the potential success of a new shopping center, Elliott commented that downtown Terre Haute has an advantage in that there are no regional shopping centers with the exception of the Honey Creek Mall.

Referring to studies which indicate that the local market could absorb two regional shopping centers, Elliott said that a downtown center could probably intercept traffic from areas to the north and east of Terre Haute.

While the population of Terre Haute may not be that large, he noted that it is the size of the market area which is significant. He put the figure at between 200,000 to 300,000.

Upon the conclusion of his talk, the session was opened to questions from the CAP members attending.

At least one member suggested that there be more emphasis on the historical significance of the down-

town buildings. Elliott pointed out that this would present some difficulties owing to the scattered locations of such buildings, as well as the numerous vacant lots.

"If historic buildings are not concentrated, it's not feasible to make a historic district into a functional, commercial shopping facility," he said.

Individual business owners could renovate their own properties, he said, "but again, it's not the building that makes the difference, but the people that own the buildings and what they're willing to do with them."

Elliott pointed to such benefits as tax credits, accelerated depreciation, UDAG grants and other means to make the historic buildings functional. "We (the city) are trying to make available all the resources we can come up with," he said.

He noted that there has been some question as to whether or not a new downtown project would fit in with the overall character of existing buildings. "But if we tried to design the project that would be compatible with what is already there, we would have to design a project that would be compatible with vacant land," he joked.

Earlier, Elliott had passed out a summary of the department's downtown urban renewal plan, part of which indicated that 42 percent of all downtown space (ground area and building floor space) is vacant or used for parking.

The downtown area was defined as existing between Third and Ninth Streets, and Cherry to Poplar streets.

Another member complained of the lack of available parking spaces, and described it as a deterrent to increased use of the area. "It seems to me there's been a stigma in the downtown area about the parking situation, and I find it difficult to believe that there's going to be anything happening unless the parking comes first," Joe Sauer, manager of the Terre Haute Water Works, said.

Sauer said he has heard frequent complaints in the matter, and said that people build a certain negative attitude if they feel they will not find a place to park.

Elliott noted that the current layout of the downtown, as well as the uncertainty of future developments, is creating a problem with regard to any new parking facilities.

Sauer referred to it as a "chicken and egg" situation in which merchants fail to renovate properties because of lack of customers.

Other suggestions included the need for the establishment of some kind of "nice area" where people could gather, eat lunch, bring their kids, listen to symphony concerts, etc.

It was also suggested that downtown retailers place more emphasis on the nearby university community. "One of the things I still haven't figured out is why there isn't any college-oriented retail businesses downtown," Elliott said.

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Vigo County Public Library

Discrepancies Discovered In UDAG Program

By F.I. GOLDHABER
Star Staff Writer

Applications for federal loan subsidies used for rehabilitation projects apparently have not been treated equally by Terre Haute officials.

The discrepancies are in one of two grant programs criticized in an evaluation report filed by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. HUD has ordered the city to repay over \$105,000 in federal money spent locally through the Urban Development Action Grant program.

In one instance, a liquor store's application first was rejected because the wife of one of the two partners was a clerk for the Terre Haute Housing Authority.

But a bowling alley owned by the husband of the city controller was approved for a subsidy. The controller sits on the committee which approves the loan applications.

In another apparent inconsistency, funds for a counseling agency which wanted to locate in Deming Center were cut because a separate agency's project in the same building already had been subsidized. The two grants would have exceeded the total dollar amount permitted per structure.

But preliminary approval for two separate projects at the same physician's clinic was given, even though the total subsidies would have exceeded the maximum.

Urban Development Action Grant funds have been used in Terre Haute to subsidize rehabilitation loans. Owners of residential and commercial property obtained approved loans from lending institutions to rehabilitate their property. When work was completed, 25 percent of the loan was paid with UDAG funds.

Bower & Rowe Package Liquors, 2960 S. Seventh St., applied for a UDAG loan and subsidy to rehabilitate the store, according to files now kept by the Terre Haute Department of Redevelopment.

The firm was told it did not qualify because Sara Bower, Bower's wife, was a secretary in the rehabilitation department of the Terre Haute Housing Authority which, at the time, was administering the UDAG program.

Bower appealed the rejection because his wife was not involved in the administration or decision-making process of the UDAG program, according to a letter in the file. Also, she is not a stockholder in the corporation which owns the liquor store, the letter said.

HUD approved a waiver for Bower & Rowe. The firm spent \$5,411 to put a new slope roof on the building. A UDAG subsidy of \$1,350 (25 percent) was paid on Nov. 9, 1981.

A \$7,949.20 subsidy for Vigo Bowl was approved by four of the five members of the UDAG Loan Review Committee. Vigo Bowl is managed by Gordon Geckeler, who also is a stockholder, according to the files.

The fifth member of the committee, Geckeler's wife, City Controller Tharon Geckeler, was not named in the committee report approving the subsidy.

Mrs. Geckeler said she did not think she was at the committee meeting during which the loan was approved for the bowling alley.

A total of \$31,796.81 was spent at Vigo Bowl to replace the water system, replace plumbing in the restrooms, replace the roof and put in new ceiling tile, resurface and repair the bowling lanes and replace carpeting, according to the files.

Tharon Geckeler does not own stock in Vigo Bowl, according to Gordon Geckeler. She has nothing to do with the bowling alley, he said.

"Just because someone works for the city they should not be deprived of an opportunity" to participate in the UDAG program, said Choice Edwards, deputy manager of the HUD office in Indianapolis.

Waiver requests must be approved by HUD to insure there is no conflict of interest, Edwards said.

John Hanley, who chaired the loan review committee when the bowling alley subsidy was approved, said he did not know waivers were required for city officials. He remembered approving the loan, he said, because Mrs. Geckeler was not at the meeting.

Marc Elliott, also on the committee at the time the loan was granted, believes a waiver was not required because Mrs. Geckeler was not involved in the bowling alley. He does not know why others were required to have a waiver, he said.

When Bethesda Corp. and Family Services Association applied for a UDAG subsidy \$18,875 originally was approved. The firms planned to remodel what used to be the Gourmet Room in the former Deming Hotel.

Family Services wanted to relocate its offices, then at the Katherine Hamilton Mental Health Center, to the Deming Center. The cost of the project totaled \$75,510 and \$18,875 would have been about 25 percent.

The grant was reduced to \$16,900.76 because a subsidy of \$8,099.29 already had been paid to Junior Achievement. Junior Achievement also has rehabilitated space in the Deming Center for its use, according to the files.

The maximum subsidy for a commercial structure is \$25,000. Both Family Services and Junior Achievement projects were approved as commercial. If the original subsidy had been paid, the total for the two projects would have exceeded the maximum.

A UDAG subsidy of \$36,250 originally had been approved for AP&S Clinic, 221 S. Sixth St., by the loan review committee on Feb. 26, 1981. The physicians planned to spend \$145,000 to add an industrial medicine department to the clinic and to repair the roof of the existing building, according to the files.

Mike Barnes, economic development administrator for the city redevelopment department, said in a letter to Patrick Sweeney of Merchants National Bank on Oct. 16, 1981 that the maximum UDAG subsidy is \$25,000.

Barnes agreed a UDAG subsidy of \$11,621.50 could be used to pay for 25 percent of the loan to repair the roof — \$46,600. Costs of repairing the roof were listed as \$46,486. A check was issued Dec. 4, 1981 for the \$11,621.50 amount.

In a subsequent letter, Barnes said the redevelopment department "would honor a timely filed report for the maximum \$25,000" to subsidize the loan for construction of the industrial medicine wing, in addition to the UDAG funds already paid.

Apparently AP&S cancelled plans to build the addition to the clinic because an industrial medicine physician could not be found, Barnes said.

payback to HUD

T MAY 19 1982

City Planning (J.H.) UDAG

Comm

Terre Haute may go to court in effort to block

By PATRICIA KRAPESH
Tribune Staff Writer

Mayor P. Pete Chalos today said the city may go to court over a recent U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development report on local management of two federal grant programs.

HUD says the city must repay a minimum of \$98,177.97 by July 31. There's a chance the bill could increase to more than \$132,000. Local people who received federal grant subsidies are not being asked by HUD to repay the money.

"Violations of the grant agreement and application require corrective actions from the city, not the recipients," says a recent letter from HUD area manager Martha Lamkin.

"We regret that recent publicity generated in Terre Haute may have created the erroneous impression that the recipients of Urban Development Action Grant subsidies have done something wrong," the letter said.

The questions of who will pay and where the money will come from are not being publicly answered by city

spokesmen.

"Between the HUD office in Indianapolis and the Tribune, they've had their day in court and we'll get our day in court," Chalos said today. He declined further comment.

The \$98,000 payback item stems from a HUD report released in March. The city answered HUD's report in April and agreed to pay back a minimum of \$6,000. HUD was asked to look at new information and reconsider other payback items.

HUD's answer to the city's report was received Monday by Chalos. Mrs. Lamkin's letter includes a reminder that the city was supposed to reimburse \$14,083.92 to its letter of credit by February.

The \$14,000 item relates to a grant subsidy to Terre Haute Concrete Supply Corp. which HUD termed ineligible in a previous report.

Concerning the \$98,000 requested payback, HUD maintains some local rehabilitation work was ineligible. HUD claims that the city's approved application and grant agreement with HUD was violated.

HUD claims that:

- Some buildings assisted were not major structures.
- Some major additions were made to existing buildings.
- Some work was not substantial rehabilitation.

Repayment items include subsidies totaling \$30,662.74 to Junior Achievement; Terre Haute Boys Club; St. Joseph parish and Family Service Association. HUD says these structures are not commercial, and therefore are not eligible for grant assistance.

A total of \$58,682 which was approved for Frazier Realty must be paid back. According to the HUD letter, a new building was constructed after the original was destroyed by fire. HUD says new construction is not eligible. Walter M. Frazier, of Frazier Realty, declined to comment.

A third payback item under rehabilitation is a \$2,918.23 subsidy to Ernie's Electric Co. for construction of a new pole barn and fence, according to HUD reports.

Finally, HUD is requiring payback of a \$5,915 subsidy to Bell & Bracken Funeral Home. The city agreed, in April, to repay that amount because the subsidy was made after the work was completed.

All repaid money will be deposited to the city's letter of credit — the money agreement between Terre Haute and HUD.

In simple terms, the city pays back itself for subsidies HUD said were ineligible. This money can then be reallocated.

The city has not said where the repayment money will come from.

When HUD was contacted for clarification about the 15-page letter to Chalos, Mrs. Lamkin said, "We're going to decline further public comment." She said discussion would continue with the mayor and his staff only.

"I think it's in everybody's best interest," she said of the decision to not talk with reporters.

Redevelopment department director Marc Elliott was not available for comment. His department prepared the city's response to HUD.

According to reports, city attorneys are reviewing the HUD report with the possibility of legal action. City counsel Robert F. Hellmann and Robert O. Effner could not be reached for comment.

REFERENCE
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Vigo County Public Library

meeting

Key proprietors attend rehabilitation

By SUE LOUGHLIN
Tribune Staff Writer

T JUN 9 1982

Attendance was sparse — but promising.

The city conducted a seminar Tuesday to show how tax incentives could be used to rehabilitate older buildings in the downtown area — and several key figures showed up.

"There were enough important people there to get the ball rolling," William Pickett, chairman of the mayor's committee for downtown preservation, said.

Those attending included Joe Cloutier of Hulman & Co.; Morris Landsbaum, of Landsbaum Realty; Robert Kadel, Kadel's Holiday Shoppe; and Abe Malooley, Saratoga Cafe. A score of people attended the seminar at a local motel.

After the seminar, several property owners said they were interested in doing rehabilitation work.

Kadel said he would like to work with several adjoining property owners in a cooperative effort. "I want to get the building owners together. If we could rehabilitate the whole thing, that would be good."

Kadel's business is situated at 675 Wabash Ave.

He said he has already made some improvements to the structure, and intends to do further work.

"We'll go ahead and do it whether we get anything (tax credits) or not," he said.

Rehabilitation may be in the offing for the Sycamore Building, 19 S. Sixth St. Bill Francis of Sunset Harbor Inc. said that he is investigating various financial alternatives.

"At this point, we're planning on cleaning up the building and making it look like an asset to Terre Haute," he said. He said efforts will be made to preserve the building's historical integrity.

In opening remarks, Mayor P. Pete Chalos said downtown revitalization should be one of the city's major objectives.

Douglas Stern, historic preservation officer from Evansville, said it was crucial for such efforts to have the support of a leading advocate — in most cases, the mayor.

He compared the efforts of Terre Haute to a similar undertaking in Evansville. While the various laws may sound complicated, he said, "We aren't any smarter than

you are, and it has worked. It worked because the mayor has supported it and the citizens and businesses have gotten behind it."

In order to revitalize a downtown, he said all types of economic incentives have to be targeted to the area, possibly at the expense of other projects such as suburban shopping centers.

"Downtown projects succeed when every tool is used," he said.

Mike Barnes, administrator for the city's economic development commission, said the city does use industrial revenue bonds for downtown rehabilitation projects. He pointed to a \$700,000 bond application submitted for rehabilitation of the Anderson and Adler building at Third and Ohio streets.

Stern said that revitalization requires support from all sectors. "Preservation must become policy," he said. "The commitment must be there and it must be shown repeatedly."

He also explained the meaning of a "Multiple Resource

Area." Chalos has indicated that he may nominate the downtown area to that designation.

Under an MRA classification, not all structures would automatically be placed on the National Register of Historic Places, he said; each would be judged on an individual basis.

Also, property owners who objected would not have to be included.

"An MRA is a convenient designation, allowing different buildings to be classified in one application," he explained.

Otherwise, property owners would have to apply on an individual basis for listing on the National Register.

Buildings certified on the National Register are eligible for 25 percent tax credits for rehabilitation.

Stern said the Economic Tax Act of 1981 is best used to rehabilitate distressed properties which can be purchased at an inexpensive price. He said that in Terre Haute, "You have an abundance of buildings in this category." The tax act and accompanying incentives are "a potent tool at your disposal."

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

City Planning (I.H.) T JAN 22 1983
Inter-government agreement leads to sidewalk construction

An inter-governmental agreement to build new sidewalks and curbs on Wabash Avenue from 13th to 19th streets was approved Wednesday by Terre Haute's Board of Public Works and Safety.

The agreement will enable construction to begin probably this summer. The \$264,000 project will be 75 percent funded with federal highway money and 25 percent through the

city's community development block grant allocation.

The project is a continuation of curb and sidewalk work from 10th to 13th streets completed last summer. Area merchants had been asking for the improvements for several years.

The board also rescinded a previous increase in charges for disposal of septic tank waste at the sewage treatment plant. Rates will stay at

1982 levels this year — \$8 for the first 2,000 gallons.

Last March, the board had slated rates to increase to \$15 effective in 1983, but City Controller Tharon Geckeler said tough economic conditions made an increase inappropriate. The charge applies to companies that clean out septic tanks. Mrs. Geckeler predicted an increase would be passed on to customers.

Representatives of Means Services Inc. were told Wednesday that the board wasn't planning to take bids on uniform rental and cleaning. Means officials were seeking a contract with the city and claimed they could do the work more cheaply than Todd Uniforms is doing it now.

Board members told Means they would examine a proposal from the company if it cared to submit one.

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APR 20 1983

Community Affairs File

Civic Improvement Inc. disbanding

Civic Planning (T.H.) - Terre Haute Improvement

The board of Terre Haute Civic Improvement Inc. will dissolve the five-year-old organization at a Monday meeting, executive director John A. Logan said Tuesday.

"We've outlived our usefulness and there are so many other groups interested in Terre Haute," Logan said.

The group will transfer its assets — \$15,000 and the Preston House — to the Vigo Preservation Alliance, a new non-profit group, he said.

Civic Improvement Inc. was formed in 1978 by Robert M. Boyer, Lucien H. Meis Jr., Paul J. Pfister, Donald E. Smith and Myrl O. Wilkinson, Logan said. Richard G. Landini later joined the board.

The group's purpose was to develop a plan for downtown revitalization. A

plan was developed, calling for retention and renovation of some downtown buildings and demolition and new construction at other locations. But it fell by the wayside when discussions about a downtown mall began, Logan said.

"I think the mayor thought we were moving slowly," Logan said. "They moved in with the mall plan and stopped us cold."

Civic Improvement Inc. also conducted a survey of downtown buildings, which became the basis for a soon-to-be-reviewed city application for designation on the National Register of Historic Places. Logan said the group also purchased property at Sixth Street and Wabash Avenue, reselling it to Terre Haute First

National Bank for expansion, and added amenities to Sixth Street between Wabash Avenue and Cherry Street.

"We did accomplish something; it wasn't a total failure," Logan said. "But if you look around downtown, it's not revitalized."

Logan predicted the downtown eventually would revive along the lines of the Civic Improvement Inc. plan.

Gene Vaughn is president of the Vigo Preservation Alliance, the group that will inherit Civic Improvement Inc.'s assets. Directors of the alliance are Fred J. Nation and Kenneth Hannum.

— Robin Schulberg

REFERENCE
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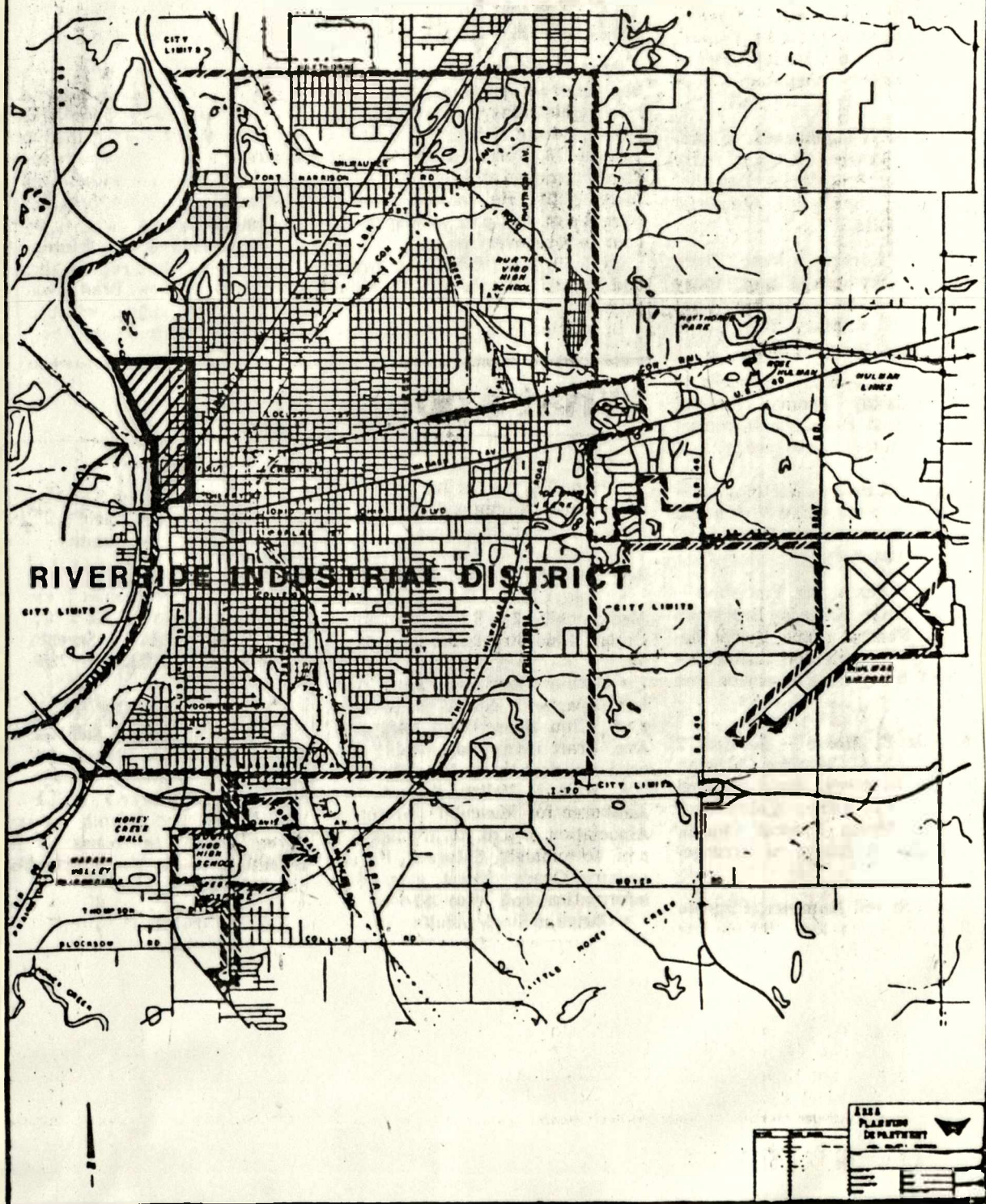
Vigo County Public Library

Metro

Community Affairs File

Ts JUL 29 1983

CITY OF TERRE HAUTE

**New development***City Planning (T.H.)*

T JUL 29 1983

The latest area of Terre Haute to be tagged for redevelopment is Riverside Industrial District, bounded by the Wabash River, U.S. 41, Eighth Avenue and Cherry Street. The city plans to rebuild streets and sewers, get rid of weeds and

junk and encourage industrial development. Mayor P. Pete Chalos said he's asking the city's Redevelopment Commission to put a \$300,000 request in its 1984 budget to help pay for the improvements, slated to start next summer.

Vigo County Public Library

REFERENCE
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Downtown

T S FEB 23 1984

City Planning (H+I)

Planning to save face came after 'die cast'

Community Affairs File

"The forms, qualities, uses and continuity of the physical environment were literally disappearing before people's very eyes ... To the observer from elsewhere, the city seemed to be fleeing to somewhere else, leaving desolation behind."

— Jim Burns

By Jan Chait

Tribune-Star Staff Reporter

Jim Burns was a planner-theorist from San Francisco called to Terre Haute in the mid-1970s to assist in early downtown improvement organizing efforts. The statement above voiced his first impression of downtown Terre Haute.

Some blame the creation of a "Y" exchange off the Wabash River bridge and the elimination of a left turn from Third Street onto Wabash Avenue for the disappearance of downtown stores. Others say the shopping centers, and Honey Creek Square in particular, were the primary cause.

Arthur Justin, president, Silverstein Brothers Inc., wrote in 1979: "The Terre Haute Downtown business area has been noticeably affected with the closing of traffic to Wabash Avenue from the west.

"... When traffic was routed from the River Bridge to Ohio Street behind Smith's Hardware and Appliance Store and when traffic from the North coming South on Third Street was blocked from a left turn ... the owner suffered an immediate and continuing loss of 20 percent to 25 percent in retail volume."

Fred Nation, then editor of the now-defunct Spectator, said the creation of Honey Creek Square was the deciding factor.

"By the time the 'Y' intersection was done, the die was cast. The death knell was certainly, without question, Sears and Honey Creek."

Nation said it was a "protracted death. Probably the reason downtown didn't go more quickly was ISU and the people downtown."

According to John R. McGregor, who teaches urban geography at ISU, the egress of retail stores from the downtown area was inevitable.

"A new urban pattern seems to be emerging," he said. "Shopping patterns have shifted. You see a new pattern of development in the fringes" of cities.

"In little towns, there's not much of a mall: There's no competition. In big cities, there's a big enough population downtown (to maintain a shopping area). It's the middle-sized cities that get hurt — this size."

He says downtown Terre Haute has "sort of a broken pocketcomb kind of appearance," which is an apt description, judging from the gaps in downtown's skyline.

When Ben Becker Shoes opened a branch store in Honey Creek Square in March 1970, general manager Charles Lawson said the store at 625 Wabash Ave. would undergo complete remodeling, including a new storefront, because "we have great faith in downtown Terre Haute."

Faith wasn't enough. Metal footprints "walking" toward an empty lot are all that remain.

Places surrounding Becker's — Montgomery Ward, Jupiter Discount Store, Roots, the Holly Shop, the Libson Shop, Taft A. Abrams and S.S. Kresge Co. — are also gone, also victims of the wrecking ball.

An unidentified spokesman for Terre Haute First National Bank, which owns the property, told The Tribune in early 1980 that the bank

was contemplating some type of development there, but nothing had been finalized.

"It just takes time and study," the spokesman was quoted as saying.

Last October, the city and the bank agreed to transform the vacant lot into a park — until the property is sold.

At the other end of that block, there's a parking lot where The Viquesney Co., Zenith Camera Shop, Aldens and Sears once stood.

Another parking lot, the one between Merchants National Bank and the Tribune Building, used to house an office building. Singer Co., Berkowitz, Pancake House and Metro's Fashions Inc.

The migration of trade to the Honey Creek area created an erosion not only of the downtown area, but the city's tax base as well: Terre Haute's attempts to annex that area have been unsuccessful.

In 1983, a total of \$237,663.04 in property taxes was collected from Honey Creek Square, Riverside Plaza and Towne South Plaza alone.

Some students at ISU, especially those who must depend on public transportation, say it's too inconvenient to shop in the malls.

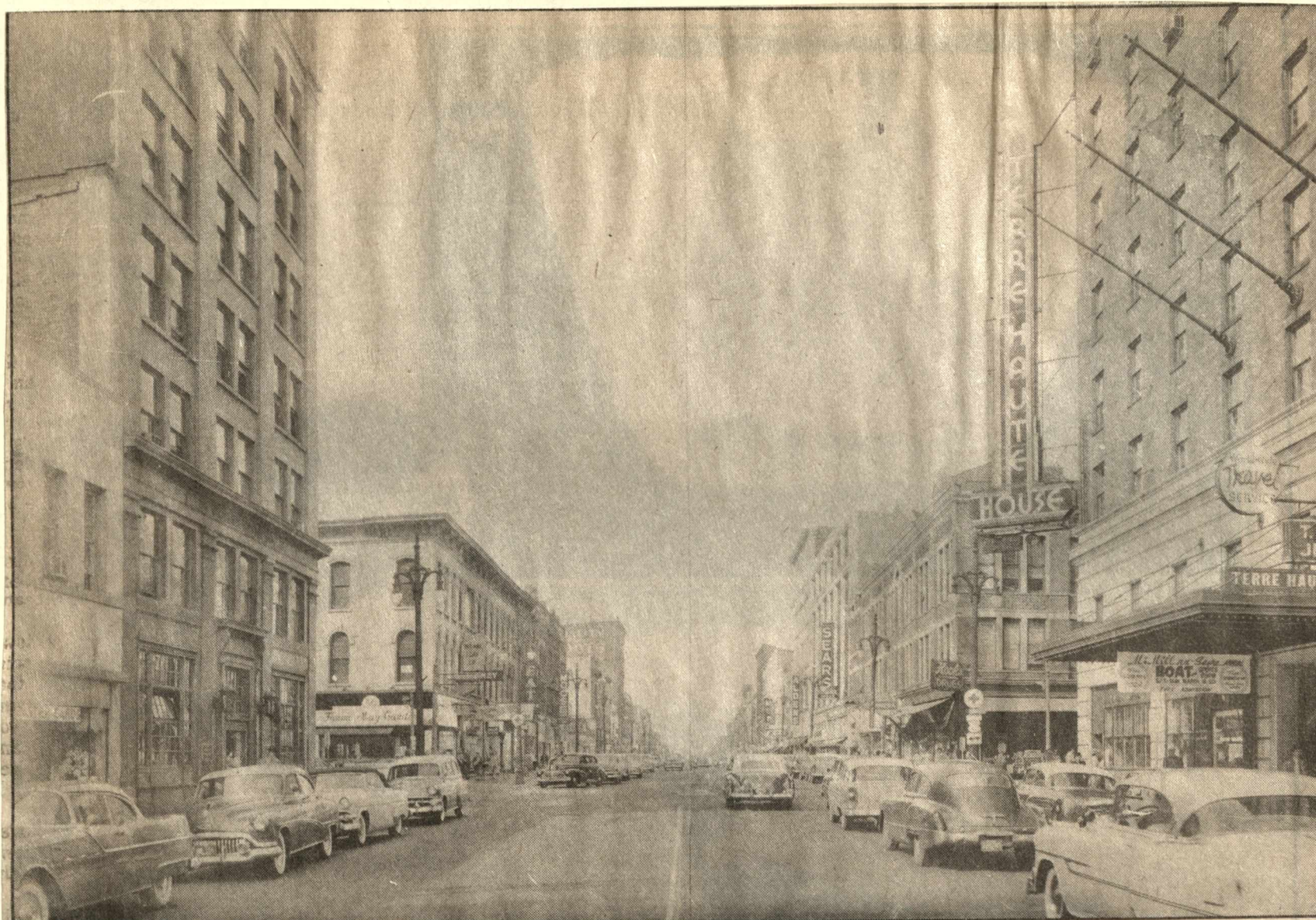
"It's really a shame to see downtown dwindle away," one ISU student said. "If you go downtown, it looks like the town's regressed instead of progressed. It's just old buildings and empty space."

"It's really a shame to see downtown dwindle away. If you go downtown, it looks like the town's regressed instead of progressed. It's just old buildings and empty space."

ISU student

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Community Affairs File



Looking west on Wabash Avenue: Taken March of 1955.

Photo Courtesy Ken Martin

'Promise' for downtown area

T s MAR 6 1985

By Jan Chait
Tribune-Star Staff Reporter

What a difference a year makes. An article on downtown Terre Haute in last year's report began with a quote from Jim Burns, a planner-theorist from San Francisco. He was called to Terre Haute in the mid-1970s to assist in early downtown improvement organizing efforts.

"The forms, qualities, uses and continuity of the physical environment were literally disappearing before people's very eyes," Burns wrote. "To the observer from elsewhere, the city seemed to be fleeing to someplace else, leaving desolation behind."

Somehow, that quote no longer seems applicable.

It's not because downtown has changed all that much in the interim; a statement last year that downtown has "sort of a broken pocketcomb appearance" still is an apt description.

No, it's because, in the interim, there's been a promise of things to come; a promise of things to replace some of the missing teeth on that pocketcomb.

One "missing tooth" already has been replaced by MAB Paint Stores' new retail outlet and office building at Third Street and Wabash Avenue.

MAB president Lee Roads said the building was constructed there because of the site's central location and easy access to both U.S. 40 and U.S. 41.

"It's easy for customers to get there and it's highly visible," he said. Access to the MAB plant, just nine blocks north on Third Street, also had a bearing.

Business at the store is "excellent. We're very happy with it," Roads said. "It's even better than we expected. That store has had the biggest growth of any store in our chain; it's now our top store."

Roads wasn't just talking about MAB's two Terre Haute stores, either — he was talking about the company-wide chain of 44 stores in five states.

There were some other openings downtown — but there also were some closings.

Kolorkorn, at 5 South Seventh St., opened — and closed.

Downtown Gifts and Guns, at 510 Wabash Ave., opened — and recently announced it would close.

The Terminal, at 820 Wabash Ave., opened — and closed — and will soon reopen.

Richard's Uptown became the third restaurant to move out of the second floor space at 618 Wabash Ave. in as many years.

Walter's Bakery, 679 Wabash Ave., closed for good.

Throckmorton's, at 512 Wabash Ave., recently announced it will close.

On the other hand, Lou Corey, owner of Corey's Fine Footwear at 9 S. Seventh St., bought the former Barker's shoe store building. He has not yet said what his plans are for that site.

Shirts Unlimited opened in the former In-Clothes-Ure at 412

Wabash Ave.

Blood Products Products Inc. of Terre Haute moved into the former Chairs Galore store at 417 Wabash Ave.

Peoples Drug Stores Inc. showed its faith in downtown Terre Haute by investing \$50,000 in its store at 600 Wabash Ave.

Indiana Savings and Loan, at Seventh and Ohio streets, closed after merging with Mutual Federal Savings and Loan, but that has a happy ending. International Tours plans to house its downtown travel agency and corporate office in the former savings and loan building.

Woolworth's closing also has a happy ending. Next-door neighbor Terre Haute First National Bank bought the building and plans to do something with it, although it is not yet known exactly what that will be.

It's quite possible that whatever is done with the old Woolworth's building, it'll be in conjunction with a planned office building on the other side of the bank, in a lot that's been empty for a number of years.

"We want to see how we can incorporate our present facilities with what's going to be new," Don Smith, the bank's president, said.

Surveying crews already have been in town to kick off the planning stages. Next on the agenda are feasibility studies, site development plans and architect drawings.

"As fast as they move, we want to move," Smith said of HBE Bank Facilities, the St. Louis firm which

is developing the plans for the proposed project. But, he added, "We'll be in the planning stages probably through most of this year."

The bank already has received some inquiries from both local and out-of-state firms expressing an interest in locating in the proposed facility.

"It's nothing we can hang our hats on at this time," Smith said. "It's a case of 'when you get ready, let us know.'"

There also have been some inquiries about space that will be available in property the bank owns in the 500 block of Wabash Avenue. Smith said current plans call for moving those operations into the new facility upon its completion.

Smith said he wants to build something "the town will be really proud of — no Taj Mahal, but something that will help ... something that's aesthetically proper for the area."

Indiana-American Water Co. also has plans to build downtown, across the street from Terre Haute First.

If all goes well, the firm will raze the vacated Meis building and erect a two-story structure in its place.

"With everything that's happening in Terre Haute, I think there's a turnaround in general," Smith said.

Recalling the old adage that a pessimist says a glass is half empty, while an optimist says it's half full, Smith said, "I think the glass is half full."